

LIFE AND LABOUR
• OF THE
PEOPLE IN LONDON

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CHARLES BOOTH

ASSISTED BY

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SUMMARY

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NOTE.—An Index to this and the preceding volumes of the Third Series will be found at the end of Vol. VI.



SUMMARY OF RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

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SRI S. C. HANDE, M.A.
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CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

§ 1

THE PARISH SYSTEM

THE organization of the Church of England is bound up with the parish system. The ground of London is cut up into ecclesiastical parishes varying greatly in size, their boundaries differing more or less from those of every other administrative area. These boundaries are recorded at Somerset House, and when the general Census is taken, the dwellers in each parish are enumerated by a special tabulation. The boundaries are also marked on maps in possession of the Archdeacons. Some of the incumbents, when issuing a report of their parish work, insert a sketch map or a list of the streets and parts of streets included. Moreover, in most parishes some form of parochial visitation is carried out, and not infrequently every house is visited, spreading the knowledge and bringing with it a sense of the presence of the clergy which justifies them in saying, 'The people know us; they know we stand ready to help.'

Thus, in various ways the information filters through to the inhabitants, and everyone is supposed to know to what parish he belongs.

If these ancient boundaries did not exist ecclesiastical

districts of some kind would have to be created, and definite areas allotted to each church or group of churches. This is done by the Roman Catholics, and has been attempted recently, though without much success, by arrangement amongst the Free Churches.

What is the best size for a parish is a moot point. A small parish area may seem more conducive to efficiency, and in accordance with this view the original parishes have been divided wherever population has greatly increased. But this policy has tended to weaken the parochial tie, which at best is never so strong with these smaller and newly formed areas, and is often entirely ignored in favour of the mother parish with its long past and ancient dignity. Beyond this, in an age like ours, when there is much changing of residence from district to district, the people do not remain within even the larger parish boundaries, but if an attachment has been formed it often results in a continued connection with the parish that has been left. In all working-class districts, indeed, and among the poor, church attendance is parochial as far as it goes, but then it does not go very far. The vast majority attend no place of worship, and of those who attend somewhere the Nonconformist churches and the missions obtain their share. Then, when we reach a class with whom church-going is more usual, parish boundaries are little regarded. The church which lies nearest, if that be sought, is often not the parish church, and if it be the nearest, there are those who will prefer to attend elsewhere at some distance 'for the sake of the walk.' But most people simply seek the kind of service which suits them wherever it may be found within range; and many, perhaps quite as many, are, it must be remembered, Nonconformists.

The eclecticism of London church-goers and their frequent disregard of parish boundaries, render the

position of those of the clergy and their co-workers, who struggle against the breakdown of these boundaries, very impracticable, and when the general failure of the Church of England to touch more than a fringe of the people is taken into account, the attitude of exclusiveness and the feeling of resentment at 'intrusion' which are often found become somewhat ridiculous.

The claims advanced, and the spirit and degree with which they are asserted, will depend on the character of the man and the section of the Church to which he belongs. With those of the clergy who believe that to them God has committed the especial charge of the souls of all who reside within the parish, the claims go very far, but though sometimes asserted they would hardly be admitted in this shape by anyone. Theoretically the masses of the people may perhaps be regarded as belonging to the Church of England, but in practice only a small minority do so. Moreover, the serious divergencies in the teaching as well as ritual of the Church herself, and the violent controversies to which these have given rise, weaken her authority and make the assumption of exclusive privileges not only the more unreasonable, but also the more difficult to enforce. The unwillingness to recognise a wide field for the efforts of other branches of the Christian Church is a relic of mediævalism involving the assumption of a catholicity of observance and uniformity of opinion that are non-existent. It is a matter in which common sense overrides logic.

Nevertheless, though inoperative in some ways and an anachronism in others, and far better suited for country than town, the parish system has great advantages, and even in London the position of parish priest is still one of considerable power. Setting aside exaggerated claims, it gives to the clergy the right of approach and appeal. It is their proper

business and no one can flout them for performing it. The different ways in which this duty is taken up, and the response secured, will be considered in later sections of this chapter.

Meanwhile we may note the great variety of local characteristics in London parishes which affect the work of the Church, aiding or thwarting, making its task comparatively easy or almost impossible as the case may be. Merely to enumerate some of these is instructive.

There are, for instance, the large mother parishes which always occupy a distinctive and well recognised position ; the City parishes, with historic traditions and only a weekday population ; the West End parishes of wealth and fashion, and their opposites to the East (with which may be included fully as many lying towards other points of the compass) ; and among the poor parishes there are those of long-established poverty and those of silt and constant downward tendency. There are parishes of one social class, whatever it may be, and those of many classes mixed ; small and compact parishes, and large straggling ones ; the parish of a well-to-do, well-established suburb, and the parish, also suburban, of rapidly increasing population ; the parish in the making, and the mission district ; the parish of a church and chapel-going district, and that in some neighbourhood infested by centres of vice ; the East End parish overrun by the Jews, or the cosmopolitan parish of Central London. All these demand special treatment if the work of the Church is to be successful.

§ 2

PARISH INSTITUTIONS

Among the parish churches of London I recognise that there are five distinct types: namely, High, Low, and Broad, essentially Individual, and essentially Parochial. In practice these shade off into one another. Among the High Churches there are many degrees of High, so that moderation can in most cases be claimed by comparison with those whose proceedings go further still, whilst the less assertive or more moderate of those that may be accounted High pass gradually into the essentially Individual or essentially Parochial. There are also many varieties of Low Church. Evening communion may be common to all, but only a few still cling to the black gown; and music, even with surpliced chorister boys, is admitted by most; so that gradually we again reach a service which can hardly be distinguished from those of the essentially parochial character. In these last nothing extreme is admitted; attraction on the one side is never carried so far as to become repulsion on the other, and in seeking to meet the wishes of most, while, if possible, excluding none, these parishes are the best representatives of our much loved, illogical, National Church. They hold a central position, and include the largest organizations and the most enlightened administration.

In their widespread ranks are found many shades, from rather High to rather Low, so that in the aggregate they are very broadly comprehensive, while their work, when on a small scale, runs insensibly into that which I have characterized as 'essentially Individual,' but these and the truly 'Broad' are really distinct types.

Amongst the 'essentially Individual' are some very remarkable pieces of work, but more generally they

seem to be without any ideal, doing just the ordinary things in the most ordinary way. Either the opportunity lacks, or the man; at any rate, such churches are without inspiration. The 'Broad' churches, though they have a distinct ideal, are hardly more successful. The position occupied is, perhaps, a false one; they represent some compromise with a world of thought altogether outside the Church, and the precise ledge of opinion upon which these representatives of the Church of England rest is often narrow, as well as shifting and uncertain. Man, opportunity, and inspiration may all be there, but still they fail.

Every church is the scene each Sunday of two main congregational assemblages, held in the morning and in the evening, and, so far as numbers are to be accepted as a test of popular sympathy, it is the numbers who attend these services that must come into question. Except at these times, unless it be for some special occasion, or for children's services, the congregations are usually very small, whether the additional services be few or many.

A numerical measure of religious influence is found in the communicants' roll, and the frequency of participation in the Sacrament is accepted by some as an intensive test; but in all branches of the Church of England (as well as in the Church of Rome) the attention to this duty at Easter is accounted a reasonable proof of Church membership, and its disregard a proof of the reverse.

The emptiness of the building, as regards adults, except for the two regular Sunday services, and often even then, applies to all branches of the Church; the only material exception being found in the attempts now being made here or there to bring in non-church-goers among men to a special popular service on Sunday afternoon. Or the Sunday afternoon may be devoted to

a children's service—weekly, or once a month—and the church be well filled. Occasionally, too, in churches which make a point of music, a sacred performance is given, either on Sunday afternoon, or in connection with the usual evening service; and then, if the music is good, a large audience may be relied on.

Such are the common uses of the church itself: two main religious services, some special gatherings, and a quantity of minor services, in accordance with the rubric, and including the early celebrations of the Eucharist. These minor services are rarely attended by any but special adherents, and the numbers, never very large, dwindle in many cases to the vanishing point, being often saved from this only by the household of the vicarage.

The regular attendants at the minor services are, to a large extent, the church workers, upon whom the parish organization depends, being those who undertake to teach in Sunday schools, to distribute the magazine, to visit on behalf of the Church, and to assist the clergy in managing clubs, mothers' meetings, thrift or temperance societies, lads' brigades and Bands of Hope; and among these workers, too, if the incumbent be a married man, his wife and family count for much.

Almost every church has the organizations we have just mentioned. They vary in size according to the character and constitution of the parish, or the success with which it is worked, and somewhat in method of administration according to the section of the Church to which it belongs, and the proportion of the lay element introduced into the management. But the organizations have much in common. Resemblance far outweighs difference, and the common features of these undertakings extend to those of the Nonconformist Churches and Undenominational Missions; the explanation being simply, that what is done is just

what can be done in these directions amongst our population, since religious effort, no less than physical energy, moves along the line of least resistance. But, nevertheless, it is in these ways that the action of the Church is most systematically parochial.

Although all might use similar language, in so far as to say that their object was the salvation of souls and the inbreathing of spiritual life, the different types of Church that have been mentioned are reflected in the action they take, and to some extent in the results they achieve, while, except as expressed in vague and general language, their aims are really very different.

Let us begin with the children. The importance of retaining the day schools is no doubt recognised wherever there is strenuous activity, whatever the branch of the Church may be, and success in this matter seems to be affected broadly by local financial resources or tradition, since in London the voluntary schools are often found in groups; as a rule, however, it is the High Church which makes much the most systematic and effective use of the opportunity that their schools offer for the definite teaching of dogma. It is their boast that 'nothing is watered down,' and yet they can claim that none of the parents object. The provisions of the conscience clause are seldom called into requisition.

It may be true, that even Nonconformist parents allow their children to receive this instruction, but, if so, it is not, we may be sure, from any sympathy with the doctrines taught, but rather in sheer disregard; reliance being placed, if the matter is thought about at all, on the counteracting influences of the home, or of the Sunday school, which may belong to their own or, at any rate, to some Evangelical Protestant Church.

Far different from this is the view of the High Church clergy. Upon the careful and persistent instilling, at the most receptive age, of what they regard

as essential truth, right doctrine, and sound principles, great hopes are founded, which it is thought another generation shall realize.

The Sunday school, if the children attend it, can be used in many ways to strengthen what the day school begins, and lead them onward to the church; and where there is no Church day school the Sunday teaching becomes of still greater importance. The church and its services are attractive. The children are allowed to be present at, and, it is hoped, will learn to enjoy, the solemn and beautiful service of the Mass, which appeals strongly to the imagination; while, by continual repetition in the schoolroom, and by careful catechising on Sunday afternoons in church, they absorb the formulæ of the underlying doctrines no less readily than they do the elementary facts of history, geography, or the multiplication table. This is the system to which the name of Bishop Dupanloup has been attached: under it a definite course of instruction, emanating from the clergy, is taken up by the teachers and passed through the ranks of the children, and, having been impressed on their minds and memories, comes back to be tested at the source, by question and answer, *vivâ voce*, in church. This method, being found generally useful in bringing order and discipline into Sunday-school work, is being widely adopted, and not by the High Church party alone, but it is the Ritualists who lay most stress upon it and carry it to the greatest perfection.

During early childhood this work, no doubt, goes satisfactorily, but to maintain the 'hold' that is supposed to have been acquired something further is needed; and by the more thoroughgoing it is frankly admitted that nothing but the confessional will serve. If there be the habit of confession to keep all together, guilds and Bands of Hope, boys' clubs and girls' clubs, gymnastics and drill, will lead safely to confirmation in

the bosom of the Church. Without it, all they do for religion often seems like carrying water in a sieve. But robust, indeed, is the faith of those who rest their hopes on the spread of the practices of the confessional in England.

The ordinary class system, which is usually employed in the Sunday schools of the Evangelical Churches of the Establishment as well as by the Nonconformists, and which shares the field with all except those that are definitely High, hardly requires description. It is full of natural imperfections. The incapacity as dogmatic teachers or disciplinarians of the young people who volunteer for the service cannot be denied, if it be tested by any very high standard. This is the weakness of the system, but in the simple relations which spring up between the teachers and the children lies its strength, and with this it carries the great advantage of a beneficent reaction on the lives of these young teachers, an advantage which is lost if their services are not needed, or if they become mere puppets moved in the interest of dogmatic accuracy.

The Evangelicals are, in their own way, as anxious as the High Church clergy to begin well by making good use of their day schools to lay the foundations of belief; but would more likely use the simile of 'sowing the good seed.' They place their confidence in the power of the Gospel, and recognise that the seed has to germinate, trusting to its bringing forth, 'in God's own time, the fruits of regeneration. With this ideal the simple class system of the Sunday school falls in well; it is followed by Bible-classes, and at length, it may be soon or it may be late—not with everyone, but at any rate with some—the power of the Word is felt, the great miracle happens, and a new soul is born into the Church. The Evangelicals, likewise, endeavour by boys' clubs and girls' clubs, 'gymnastics and drill, to keep their young flock together, but

mainly look to the inward working of the spirit under the stimulus of Evangelistic preaching, relying upon the promise of God that His word shall not return unto Him void, and sustained in this faith by wonderful, and ever renewed experiences of the soul. But they, too, are often disheartened and sorely tried by failure. The world continually claims the children, and God's kingdom seems to come no nearer.

Other branches of the Church demand less and are consequently less disappointed. With most of them the religious teaching in day schools is not so much regarded as of importance in itself as in serving to give tone to all the rest. If, in their Sunday schools, they adopt some modification of the Dupanloup system, or insist that those who undertake to teach should be themselves first taught, it is rather in the interest of discipline, and order, and general efficiency, than of dogma. They, too, in proportion to their vigour, make use of boys' clubs and girls' clubs, gymnastics and drill; but for spiritual stimulus of the young they content themselves with confirmation classes. Religion is for them the highest form of culture, but they do not set the world in antithesis to the Church or to the Elect. They accept the world and seek to sweeten, to soften, and to humanize it; and whatever they can accomplish in this direction is success as far as it goes.

Distinctive characteristics are naturally more marked with the more definitely religious organizations. The High Church has its guilds and confraternities, its altar servers, and many others who, with quaint titles, are employed in its ceremonies. Bible-classes, though not out of place or even out of fashion anywhere, are found in fullest development with the Evangelicals; and it is the same with the old-fashioned 'Dorcas' meeting. Amongst the Evangelicals there is, however, something lacking; there seems to be a want of organized Church work; perhaps they may yet take

up the methods introduced from the United States and adopted by most of the Free Churches, resulting in the formation of senior and junior 'Societies of Christian Endeavour.' Meanwhile foreign missionary enterprise assumes a more important place with the Evangelicals than with those who find a larger sphere of work among their own people and at home.

Whatever the system adopted, and whatever the effect on their future lives, the children come readily to school and are willing to behave nicely and to learn what they are taught. No doubt some other benefits are offered. Almost every school has its annual treat in summer, and there are Christmas trees with little presents perhaps, and buns and prizes. In these ways it is for the most ragged children that most is done. The system has its bad side when it takes the shape of competition between the sects, or when the children attempt to attend two schools, so as to qualify if possible for a double allowance of the good things offered ; but, otherwise, such little perquisites of child life cannot seriously be called bribery or accounted demoralising.

The Band of Hope, or some equivalent, is as easily successful as the Sunday school, and is therefore as universally adopted. Temperance propaganda is the main object, but to this is added, in most cases, some reference to religious duties, and in others, to kindness to animals. Bands of Hope, Leagues of Pity, Societies of the Holy Child have one and all, by whatever name they go, their treats and teas, their processions and banners, and whatever the influence exercised by them on the future, in the production of sober men and women, they undoubtedly bring about good feeling in the present and add brightness to the children's lives.

The children are caught young and love to march and sing, and are easy converts to the virtue of

abstaining from alcohol. A feeling that 'the sins we're inclined to' deserve attention as well as 'those we've no mind to,' is doubtless the reason why the kind treatment of animals has been grafted upon the temperance tree in Bands of Hope. But beyond their direct efforts to check intemperance and cruelty, the great value of these almost uniformly successful institutions, lies in companionship and wholesome pleasure ; for these things, and perhaps these only, can check the special vices of childhood, which are not intemperance, but quarrelling and deceitfulness and all forms of impurity. It is the same with children of every class, and in every class the most successful treatment consists of well-ordered games.

It is when school age is past that all denominations alike find their difficulty. The desire to put away childish things comes very early ; much sooner than St. Paul intended. Great efforts are made to retain some hold on the children at this time ; everywhere the efforts are of the same kind and nowhere are they particularly successful.

Guilds of some kind are very generally established, but their action rarely goes beyond the selection of a few children, drawn probably from those whose parents are in some way more closely connected with the church than is the case with the rest, or from those few who are born with the wonderful endowment of a religious disposition ; those living souls on whose experiences rest the beliefs and hopes of all the churches. The same ground, or nearly so, is covered by confirmation classes. The children who attend Sunday schools are free, so far as home control goes, to join such guilds and classes or not to join, as they please. Their parents will probably neither urge nor prevent it. Approval will most likely be felt if not expressed. There will certainly be no ridicule. But comparatively few join, or remain for any length of

time members. At first both boys and girls usually prefer to run loose, and may be more easily 'picked up' after an interval, when 'club age' has been reached. But the clubs which they may then happen to join will very likely have nothing whatever to do with the church and schools of their childhood.

Of all such institutions the Church Lads' Brigade is perhaps the most successful, but it is distinctly more military than religious in its character, and prevails more in the outer than in the inner districts. Boys' clubs and brigades, from the religious point of view, are an attempt to prolong personal relations that have begun in the Sunday school. They can be frankly subsidised and managed by the clergy without any loss of independence being felt. In return for the enjoyments of cricket and football, swimming, gymnastics, drill, and perhaps a week 'in camp,' some recognition of religion will gladly be given. Attendance at a Bible-class once a week, or coming to church on Sunday afternoon, is not regarded as an exorbitant demand, and in the clubs the boys will attend to an opening or closing prayer as devoutly as is done in any large school of any class. Whatever the precise value of these forms or of the direct religious teaching sometimes attempted, the value of well-managed boys' clubs and brigades in the formation of character can hardly be overestimated. Few efforts are more pregnant with good than this and the parallel work among girls. As the boys grow older difficulties arise. They consider themselves men. A break will almost surely be made, and it may perhaps be as well if at this age the boys pass on to the clubs, classes, and cadet corps connected with Settlements and Polytechnics. Enough if a good foundation has been laid. Liberty the lads must have, but how they use it will greatly depend on the influence which church or Sunday school and the other organizations have been able to exert. Young men's institutes under religious

auspices, are difficult to manage ; and indeed, whether it be in dealing with boys, or with young men, to steer a safe course between piety and liberty, between the goody-goody and the rowdy, demands constant attention as well as exceptional gifts on the part of the responsible managers.

As a means of retaining or acquiring a hold on lads after they have left school, and when boyhood is past, there is but little success if the results are to be measured in attendance at church. So completely is this recognised that, especially in the inner districts of London, the clubs are now generally confined to church members or those who are preparing for confirmation. They are then only an extension of the definite religious devices of Guilds and Bible-classes, and eventuate in the consolidation of an inner band of workers who become the mainstay of each church organization. The meetings of this little band are above all for prayer and mutual support, but privileges and even pleasures are added, and the guild perhaps grows into an institute, with its library and piano, and even its smoking room and billiard table. Such developments are, however, less likely in the inner district than in the more congenial atmosphere of outer London.

Girls' clubs succeed wherever they are fairly tried, and must hold a very important place in any summary of the influences now at work upon character ; especially in districts where the life of the streets is the only alternative. Girls have fewer outdoor games than boys, but are more amenable and more easily occupied. For them dancing is a great resource. They are also more responsive to religion. But they, too, especially those of the 'factory' class, are apt to break loose and 'chuck religion,' and, as young women, are often perhaps best passed on to institutions not connected with any church.

Mothers' meetings are, I think, solely a Protestant

institution, but amongst all the Protestant churches, including even the High Church, they exhibit little variety, except in size and in the differences which size involves ; plans suitable for a meeting of twenty or thirty women being unsuitable for one of two or three hundred. Hopes as to what may be ultimately achieved by these meetings will vary, but the primary idea is always the same : to give to tired and worried women a peaceful hour enlivened by conversation or reading aloud. A prayer is said and a hymn is sung, and often one of the clergy comes in to close the meeting with a short address. Sometimes the women bring their infants and sometimes not ; or the little ones may be left in another room in the kindly charge of other helpers ; usually the women sew, making up garments from materials supplied at wholesale prices ; sometimes a cup of tea is provided. Connected with these meetings there are always minor thrift clubs for coals or boots or a Christmas dinner, and as an encouragement a bonus of a penny or twopence in the shilling is very often given. There is also almost always a summer treat consisting of a day in the country, the women contributing part of the cost. The institution is certainly popular and fits in well with general religious and charitable work in the parish. There are, no doubt, cadgers among the women, and the meetings may sometimes be conducted so as to foster hypocrisy, but it is unnecessary that this should be so, and quite unlikely that it is so in the majority of cases. A denial of the utility of the meetings on this ground would be to attack the utility of any combination whatever of social, charitable and religious work. If carefully and honestly conducted, whether on a large or upon a small scale, the mothers' meeting is a good and useful institution, although as a definite religious influence it is not of much account.

It is said that some women manage to attend several

meetings connected with different churches and missions ; putting in at each a sufficient number of appearances to obtain the advantages offered. Such diligence may perhaps be accounted as a praiseworthy effort for the sake of their children and homes, but smacks of hypocrisy and deceit. On the whole, however, I believe that the mothers' meeting, from a religious as well as a social point of view, fills a real want. These poor women can with difficulty be spared from home on Sunday. Getting up rather late, they have the children to dress and the dinner of the week to cook. Sunday afternoon and evening among the working classes are largely devoted to visiting or to family gatherings ; the young people are not tied to the fire side, and the mother must remain at home. It is different when church or chapel-going is a family habit, but amongst the poorer classes such cases are comparatively rare. The women, however, have, nearly all of them, a strong though rather indefinite sense of religion which the mothers' meeting does something to satisfy, and which finds expression in other ways, such as may be found in the proprieties of the marriage rites and of churchings, and in a respect for baptism.

• The women who come to the meetings connected with the Established Church fairly represent 'the poor.' The wives of regularly employed labouring men may attend in some cases, but those of artisans hardly ever ; for as a class they hold themselves above anything of the kind. Of the 'very poor' only the more respectable (generally widows) would venture, others of this class being found almost exclusively at meetings connected with missions which touch a lower grade all round than the churches.

A few churches have 'fathers' meetings,' which, if pleasantly managed by the lady who presides at the vicarage, bring about very happy relations ; but as a rule the only counterpoise to the mothers' meeting is

the men's club. In effect these clubs are of two kinds, namely those that are confined to communicants or regular attendants at church, and those which are open to all parishioners. The object of the first is to bind together those who belong to the church, to attach them to it more securely, and to add interests and even pleasures to their lives. These clubs are never very large, but to some extent they attain their object. The open clubs, on the other hand, aim at bringing men under the influence of the church ; but in this they always fail, and in consequence many of them have been given up. The greater the effort in this direction the greater the failure, till, finally, the atmosphere of the club may become positively hostile to the church. If, however, this attempt is abandoned, and the club accepted simply as a social institution, it may succeed and be a very useful piece of work. There is, however, little to connect it necessarily with church organization ; it seems to fall more naturally within the sphere of the social efforts which go by the name of 'Settlements.'

With the exception of some Friendly Societies that make teetotalism their basis, adult societies for the encouragement of temperance or of total abstinence from alcohol, are almost all connected with some Christian church or mission, and there are few churches or missions which do not interest themselves in work of this kind. But it is felt to be a thing apart from religious work. The effort is the result of an overpowering sense of the awful social consequences of excessive indulgence in drink, and the expression of a deep enthusiasm which is almost a religion in itself. But Christian people are not agreed as to the best cure of this evil, and a religious mind no more implies total abstinence (though it may imply sobriety) than either sobriety or total abstinence implies a religious mind. The 'disconnection' between these societies and religion

is shown by the fact that they differ hardly at all, whatever the flag they fly. Low Church or High, Protestant, Nonconformist or Roman Catholic, or mission of whatever type, all employ much the same methods in seeking to deal with the same evil, and all equally fail.

Efforts to promote thrift, like those aimed at temperance, are common to most churches and are unaffected by doctrinal considerations or differences. They are of importance here mainly from their connection with other parish work, and especially with systematic visiting. Though good in themselves they are considered of still greater importance as forming the 'meshes of the net' let down by those who seek to be 'fishers of men.' As regards their 'slate clubs' and 'provident loan societies,' the churches and missions compete with the public houses, following the same lines and adopting the same names. These are not in themselves the most desirable forms of thrift, but they are better than nothing, and it is a great improvement to dissociate their management from the atmosphere of the public house. In organizing collecting banks, however, wherever that has been done, the churches break new and useful ground, alike as regards religious influence, the encouragement of thrift, and the control of charity. The development is recent and may have its limitations in local conditions, but I am more disposed to think that its applicability turns mainly on the way in which religious or philanthropic people regard the persons they seek to help. It is found in practice that unless they collect, those who visit among the poor can hardly avoid giving; but that if collecting is their business they may go to the very same houses without being expected to give. This, by placing visitation on a business footing, reacts on the entire system. To make the visit acceptable, class superiority in the visitor is no longer necessary; all trace of patronage vanishes, or if any remains it is the

depositor who becomes the patron and would receive the acknowledgment of thanks.

It is a plan which opens up great possibilities for social and, indirectly, for religious influence ; and taken all in all, when we consider its effect in every direction, no social development of the day seems to me more promising than this of the organized collection of savings by those who seek with single minds the physical, moral, and spiritual welfare of the people. No doubt it may be said that to offer such facilities is to encourage laziness in saving, and it is true that forms of thrift which demand some power of initiative and a willingness to take trouble, are best. But to reject on that account the means by which alone the great popular insurance companies achieve their success, would be to adopt most unnecessarily a counsel of perfection.

§ 3

PERSONS EMPLOYED AND METHODS OF WORK

Rector or vicar, curates, one or more, Scripture reader, Bible woman, parish nurse, deaconess, Blue Lady, Grey Lady, or Sister of this or that community ; of these every parish includes a selection, and there may also be a City missionary, or a Church Army captain assisting in the work. All these may be termed professional. In addition, there are those who in comparison may be regarded as amateurs : young people to teach in the Sunday schools ; ladies to help with the mothers and with the elder girls, and to work as district visitors ; young men (not very easily obtained) to assist with clubs and gymnasiums, and their elders to

act as sidesmen, or to bring a lay element into the parish organizations as committeemen, treasurers, &c.

Scripture reader, Bible woman, and deaconess, and the Blue Ladies of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, are more generally connected with Evangelical churches; Grey Ladies and the Sisters are, as a rule, High Church; but except the Sisters all these assistants in parish work may be found connected with the churches belonging to the middle group, which are neither High nor Low.

The Scripture reader is the immediate assistant of the clergy, and we found him frequently called into consultation over our inquiries. If the parish has a mission room he will often conduct a service there on Sunday evenings, or this duty may be undertaken by Church Army captain or City missionary.

Where Sisters are employed, or where there is a deaconess, the organizing of district visiting may fall on them, but otherwise this work is arranged by the clergy, and may be shared by a paid Bible woman and by the nurse if there is one.

Such is a bare recital of the classes of people engaged, but there are many personal characteristics and some ideals which greatly affect the way in which the work is done, and which must be taken into account in our description of it.

The ideal of the High Church is that the clergy should not marry. Celibacy is not indeed put forward as an absolute duty to their calling, but they recognise the advantage gained by being able to live more completely in and for the work, unaffected or less affected by 'the incalculable action of the other sex.' The vicarage then becomes the 'clergy house,' and is occupied perhaps by the whole of the clerical staff, being made as like a Catholic presbytery as may be. Between it and the church and schools (the whole

forming, if possible, one group of buildings) the clergy are to be seen going about in cassock and biretta. Perhaps they play at it a little, but the plan effects a real concentration of energy and has much to recommend it. Moreover, this ideal of single-minded devotion to their work carries with it a great moral force.

A married man, even if he is a priest, is bound to maintain his family. The saintly life of a St. Martin, sharing his cloak with the beggar, and as ready to give away his last as any other shilling, is incompatible with family duties. But the saintly, self-sacrificing life is that which strikes the imagination of the poor as nothing else does. It is also the ideal conception of the young man who, with high motives, has taken Orders, and where these methods of renunciation are adopted, even though the endowments are small, the churches are well-manned with the very pick of those who enter the Church. Nor are women lacking. They, too, are deeply moved, and sisterhoods spring up to share the work. Money, too, is found. The self-devotion displayed opens the purses of the rich as well as the hearts of the poor, and the Church becomes a great power.

Without going so far as the extreme High Church party in this respect, many others hold that men who wish to take up work among the poor of London, or, perhaps, any large city, in order to do effective work must throw themselves entirely into it, foregoing all else for a certain number of years, and then, perhaps, give place to others coming fresh to the task. Only a young man, it is held, can stand the strain, and for the time a single life is essential.

The celibate ideal shines forth also in the action of some among the class of clergy whom I have ventured to characterize as 'essentially Individual'; men who never have married and who live in the companionship

of their people, occupying, it may be, two rooms above their club. It is not certain that marriage was foregone in order to live this life, but it is certain that marriage would be incompatible with it.

But if we seek a different ideal it is at hand. To find it we may turn to any ordinary small parish. Near the church stands the vicarage, with its helpful household, and there is no figure in English life more beautiful than that of the woman who, as wife or daughter, faithfully shares her husband's or father's parish work ; finding, as women best know how, a sane, though perhaps illogical, solution of the problems which a saint evades.

Finally, we may bring into comparison the ideal presented by a large mother parish organization presided over by a rector or vicar whose wife and home and family are merged in the work, its social duties, and responsibilities, but under whom there may be five or six unmarried curates and one or two hundred voluntary workers. The endowments may be large, but the expenses are larger still, and are often met out of the private purse of the incumbent. The work is nobly done, and worthy of a great National Church.

Apart from ideals such as these, connected partly with the branch of the church or particular parish to which a man belongs or has been appointed, personal qualities go far in determining the character of his work. The differences shown will be found to be due even more to degrees of vigour or intensity of energy or conviction than to varieties of doctrinal belief. Such differences may be the result of disposition, optimistic or pessimistic ; or due to the gift of organization, making things possible to one man which to another would be out of reach ; or may be a question of physical strength or of youth or age, of undimmed illusion or exhausted hopes, or simply of development,

as the 'new broom' becomes in its time and turn an 'old stick.'

Personal characteristics vary greatly. Not only are there those suggested above—the capable organizer delighting in the perfection of his system, to be contrasted with the old man, past his work; the enthusiast, not always young, but always hopeful, and the disillusioned man who claims to 'have tried everything'; the over-strained man and the easy-going optimist who takes everything good-humouredly, accounting the results 'not his business'—but there are many other types that could be mentioned and contrasted; as, for instance, the man of ready tongue, but little brain, and the scholar whose scholarship is wasted; the kind old man who is father of his parish, and the young one whose basis is fraternal. Then there is the man who is priest and parson first and last, and he who is also politician; or one may contrast the parochial position of a rich bachelor who spends his money on the supply of additional curates, with that of a man with a large family and small means; or the mental position of a thoughtful and very conscientious man who 'finds it difficult not to give the impression that he believes more than he really does,' with the eager confidence that only longs to meet and grapple with infidelity. There are men who, having begun life in some other profession or business, have turned to religious work, and finally taken Orders; and young men of position, fresh from the University, who, without particular vocation, have drifted into the Church for family reasons. There are men's men, and there are leaders of women; there are those who have the art of managing boys, and those to whose coat-tails the children cling. There is the shy man, and his opposite; the spiritually-minded, and he who is not that way gifted. All these we have met. They are all familiar types, and their character is stamped upon what they do.

Among the subordinate clergy there is probably a corresponding variety, but we are very short of actual knowledge, having seen comparatively little of the curates upon whom so large a share of parish-work falls. In some cases they were present at our interview with the incumbent, or we were referred to them for further information. Some, too, were seen who at the time were in full charge of their parish, but I feel that the point of view of the curate is not adequately represented in these pages. Yet it would be worth gathering, and I shall be glad if it should be forthcoming in the shape of criticism.

As young men they plunge with great courage and invincible energy into a sea of difficulties. They without doubt encounter manifold disappointments and disillusionments, and must depend very much on the sympathy of their chief; and to him, it is very evident, that they stand in every degree of subordinate relationship, from a very little thought of assistant to an honoured and equal brother in arms.

It is necessary to refer, though briefly, to the instances in which the fixed tenure of incumbencies works ill, and even at times scandalously; as when wits fail from senile decay or incipient insanity; or when there is drunkenness; or when the income of an absentee incumbent is sequestrated to pay his debts; or, still worse, when a man can even utilize his position in the Church to carry on a career of swindling; or, to take a milder case, when a man, being incapacitated by illness, neglects his work, yet hangs on for years for the sake of the stipend or in order to qualify for a retiring allowance or perhaps a small pension. The fact that such things as these happen clearly calls for some better system of compulsory retirement.

But against these instances may be fairly set the far more frequent case of those who though worn out, and

in spite of constant breakdown in health, stick to their work. In no field of duty is greater devotion shown.

The whole conception of the duties of the clergy has changed and widened in the course of the last century. No body of men could possibly succeed in performing the strangely varied functions now expected of them : to detect abuses and instruct in the principles of sanitation ; to study political economy and advise in trade difficulties and disputes between masters and men ; to teach principles of thrift and household management, and to assist in finding employment for young people ; to do duty as trustees or impressarios in providing art and amusement, guaranteed to be pure and wholesome, and, in fact, to be always prepared with a panacea ready made to fit any emergency.

But the peculiar hardship of their situation is that not only are they unable to accomplish all that is looked for from them, but that the attempt to do so tends to unfit them for the work which has always been admitted to be proper to their calling. For the mazes of theology, for the effects of pulpit oratory, for the profounder consideration of the experiences of human nature and its spiritual needs, which can only be, matured and digested amidst a certain amount of leisure, they often leave themselves no time at all. Work of this character cannot possibly be done by men whose time is spent in button-holing Members of Parliament to get a clause introduced into a Bill, or in flattering painters to lend their works to an exhibition, or talented music-hall artists to give help at an entertainment—efforts which, however hateful, become necessary when men feel that they have not only to provide the amenities of life for 'their flocks, but that it must be done at little or no cost in money. No wonder that the 'amusement provided by the 'worried pastor is too often poor

stuff. No wonder if his spirit is exhausted and his words lack power.

The Scripture reader, as a religious type, is a somewhat old-fashioned institution, and perhaps an anachronism, but still fills a useful place in bridging the gulf of class. Those we have seen have all been men in years, with long local experience, and a quite remarkable knowledge of the people among whom they have worked. This knowledge is possessed also, although in a more highly localized way, by the City missionaries, but these gather it and hold it as servants of their Society, rather than as servants of the Church, even though the vicar be their superintendent, as is always the case when they assist in parish work. They report directly to their own Society, and their position becomes somewhat anomalous. The men themselves are invariably of Evangelical opinions, as is the Society which sends them forth, and it is complained (even by Evangelical parsons) that their real sympathies are with the Nonconformists. Each of them has an exactly defined district, and if not accepted as co-workers they are apt to be regarded as intruders, and their work may even clash with the general scheme of parish operations. The more uniform agreement with the orthodox Nonconformists in matters of opinion, coupled with the fact that these last have no established privileges that can be encroached upon, explain to a very great extent the present relationship of the City missionaries with the Church of England, but do not simplify it, and what is regarded as their hostility to the Establishment is often keenly felt.

With regard to the Church Army officers, at any rate, no such complaint can be made, for loyalty to the Church is to them the breath of life. It remains to be seen, however, whether they are able to bring the assistance needed to bridge the gulf which now separates

the Church from the people. The general work of the Army is described in a later chapter. Something will be said later also of the place occupied by Sisters and Deaconesses in the Church of England, and of the parallel development of the sphere of women's work among the Nonconformists. But the task of parish visiting, to the organization of which Sisters and Deaconesses devote much of their time, is best described here. With its various ramifications it touches every side of parish work.

The word visiting in this connection is used to mean a great variety of things, varying partly with the person who visits, partly with the person visited, and partly with the avowed object with which the task is undertaken.

To urge on all their religious duties, to offer to each the spiritual guidance and the hopes and consolations of religion, and to stand ready to help in trouble or distress, are the high aims of parochial visitation ; and when it is said that attendance at church is not a sufficient measure of religious success, it is to the system of visitation that we needs must look for some other basis. If the people do not come to the Church, the Church can still go to the people. In this connection it will be useful to describe the different kinds of parochial visits.

If complete house to house visitation is attempted for a whole parish it may be done, for once, gradually by the vicar himself ; or the clergy may divide up the parish and do it amongst them ; entering in their notebooks every house and every family, with such particulars as can be gained, to be the foundation of future work ; for unless kept up and acted upon, visiting is of little use. To ensure this continuity district visitors are told off ; a group of streets being allotted to each. Some valid excuse will still have to be sought, such as the distribution by hand of a leaflet or magazine in

order to spread information as to the action of the church. This may imply nothing more than the handing of something in, or pushing it under the door, like any handbill advertisement; or may be accompanied by a friendly word of greeting given and received; or a definite invitation to come to church or to some special service may be made by word of mouth as well as by circular. If, however, the distribution covers the whole parish the personal element cannot be largely introduced; for it is hardly conceivable that the distributing visitors should in that case have much individual acquaintance with those upon whom they call, or be able to speak to them profitably in the name of the Church. Thus when it is said that 'every house and every family is regularly visited,' it never means much, so far as the great majority of the people are concerned; but what may fairly be hoped is that any case of sickness or distress will be heard of, so that all may know that the Church is not only a neighbour, but is anxious also to play the part of a friend.

Magazine distribution, for what it may be worth as a visit, adjusts itself to all classes, from those whose doors stand always open and for whom their doorstep serves as ante-room, to those who meet such approaches with a letter-box and a chilling request 'not to ring unless an answer is required.'

Other forms of visit are specialized, as to the class of those visited, as to the object immediately aimed at, and as to the personal qualifications and interests of the visitor. In some parishes the visiting is confined to selected poor streets, and the needs of the people then furnish what may be regarded as a sufficient excuse.

Unless it be for census taking, as suggested above, the visits of the clergy themselves are necessarily occasional. Of social visiting on parish lines there is,

in London, hardly any. The reason for the pastoral visit is to be found in the existence, real or supposed, of some special need for advice or assistance, or the rendering of some spiritual service. This is the very flower of the work; to this all the rest may perhaps be regarded as leading up.

Let us now, with the task of visiting still in mind, imagine a busy parish, with mothers' meetings, Sunday schools and numerous other organizations. Absentees must be looked up: they may be sick or in trouble, or they may be careless or drifting into bad ways. People need to feel that they are not forgotten. Such visits can only be made efficaciously by those who are managing the meetings and the schools, and who thus know and are known to those they go to see. To visit absentees may be the more pressing care, but it is desirable to visit regular attenders also in order to strengthen the ties and bring ever fresh influence to bear upon their lives and habits. There are children who should be confirmed, or young people who are slipping out of reach, or a husband with whom perhaps 'something might be done.' All this concerns families already known, and already more or less under the influence of the Church.

In addition it is always necessary to be breaking new ground; to offer what the Church has to offer and seek to win recruits. For this purpose the parish is mapped out, the work is divided and assumes in each part the form suited, or believed to be suited, to the class of the inhabitants. In the poor quarters the visitors, who require to be experienced persons, go boldly from house to house, and in this portion of the work Church and charity are dangerously apt to go hand in hand. It is usual for those who undertake it to meet weekly, perhaps on Monday morning, to report and consult with the clergy and with each other

on the cases which need special assistance and to indicate those where the nurse is required, or those which the clergy themselves should visit. Thus what begins as house to house visiting leads to special visits of relief in destitution or of help in sickness or of consolation in sorrow. All these require particular aptitudes, but the general visitor needs to be all things in turn: to know when to be merely social, talking about things in general, and when to launch forth into such questions as ventilation, or the management of babies, cookery or cleanliness; when to speak a word on drink or temper, on extravagance or on thrift; or when to touch on spiritual issues; when to read the Bible, when to pray.

There are other objects to be reached by visiting, such as the organizing of country holidays for children and collecting their contributions, as well as making thrift collections of various kinds. Those who undertake these things are given a list of addresses and have a comparatively simple task, and thus, while this work is often added to that undertaken by the responsible district visitor, it is also possible to organize it separately and bring others, with less experience or of a different class, into co-operation.

• Upon the direction, appointment and due combination of all this work, successful parish management depends.

§ 4

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY THE CLERGY REGARDING
THEIR WORK

Just as the spring of a man's energy and the direction of his activities are in great measure determined by his temperament and gifts, so, too, we are apt to find opinions as to the relative importance of this or that sphere of work biassed by the same personal factors. It may be the possession of some special gift that influences opinion in favour of it. Thus the man who is endowed with the necessary simplicity of nature, or kindliness, or assurance, may be led to the view that house to house visitation is absolutely essential to the successful working of a parish; or a good preacher may attach exceptional importance to the sermon. On the other hand, bias may be due to the lack of some particular power and may lead men to attach an exaggerated importance to that which is for them unattainable. It results that from the mass of our evidence, whether as regards the work of the Church or the attitude of the people, it would be possible and even easy to select from the opinions expressed by the clergy themselves those which would support almost any view.

The selection that follows has been made with no special aim beyond that of indicating 'the variety and, so far as may be judged, the balance of opinion on the whole, but will serve also to show how the clergy regard their own work, and how the work reacts upon them. Their opinions are often valuable and always interesting. I give none that I do not believe to be honest. It will be seen that they are very frank, outspoken, and conversational in character. Some of the remarks refer to the clergy themselves; others to church-goers, others to absentees; some to one class

in the community and some to another, but the more-particular reference will generally be self-evident.

The attitude of the people towards the Church, which is naturally mentioned again and again, admittedly varies according to class, but even allowing for this, very contradictory opinions find expression. Thus, while it is claimed by more than one that 'very High lines are understood and liked best,' we are also told that 'as to High Church doings people like brightness, but ignore doctrinal meanings,' and by a third it is said that the people 'don't care a bit about doctrine and hate ritual;' and he himself had been constrained to give up the use of a processional cross. Doctrinal indifference is, however, quite compatible with personal loyalty, as of those who, we are told, 'would fight for their parson against Kensit' though they do not care 'whether he stands on his head or his heels before the altar,'* or vague beliefs be held which, though they mean nothing in their lives, yet will cause men to side against the secularists for, as they say, attempting 'to take away our —— religion.'

In connection with the same subject, but with reference to a rather higher social class, it is said that 'people want one extreme or the other, Evangelicalism or Ritualism,' and it is added that 'they are always craving for some new thing.' But this note of somewhat despondent criticism comes from a church once accounted High, which, not having advanced, has fallen behind. As opposed to this, it is said of another church that to mention incense 'would blow the roof off;' and again, of a place where High Church practices were introduced, that 'no one objected, but the bulk of the congregation left.' But it is also said that

* Mr. Kensit's death in the cause he so strenuously supported has occurred since these words were written and the above is now a tragic reference. (October 12th, 1902.)

High or Low is very much a matter of fashion (this from a church of the rich) and that complaints of too High or too Low are often mere excuses in the mouths of those who do not care to come to church at all.

Regarding the influence of the pulpit, one man says, 'the people do crave so for sermons, even if they are utter rubbish,' and another speaks of the sermon as 'the favourite portion of the service, no subject being preferred, anything liked.' 'A good preacher can always fill his church,' says one; which, if it be true (as I think it is), only shows how poor the average preaching is; and in corroboration it is often urged that the clergy should learn to preach. We are told that a sermon to be successful must be extempore in delivery, but well prepared. 'I have to ransack books and give them of my very best,' says one who can claim success.

As to the attitude of the mass of the people, opinions converge. 'It is the working classes who attend church in the smallest numbers,' says a High Church parson. 'They may come occasionally in gratitude after illness, but they drop away again. A few are caught young and kept, but for the most part both preaching and service are quite beyond them.' 'Christianity does not appeal to the working man; he has had, he thinks, enough of self-denial, and claims relaxation on Sunday.' 'Sunday is a day of rest and recreation; church-going is neither.' 'Religion is another effort.' Moreover, working men 'feel very strongly about pious employers who sweat their workpeople; they know how * * * * *'s and * * * * *'s (referring to two large and successful shops) make their money.' In fine, it is urged that 'the poor do not believe in church-going because they do not believe in church-goers. They see the church-going class spending huge sums on all kinds of luxury, and look upon their religion as humbug,* while, with regard to charity, * the administration of relief and the

insisting on church-going in return disgusts the self-respecting.' Finally, the working man is described as not having very exalted ideas as to the part played by the clergy. 'His view is that they are well paid for what they do out of the rates, or out of national funds of some kind, and so need claim no virtue in it.'

The religious ideas of the mass of the people, are certainly undeveloped; and here I may quote the opinion of a thoughtful layman, who has had prolonged and intimate acquaintance with this class. He says—"Among working men a kind of sublimated trades' unionism is the most prevalent gospel: a vague bias towards that which is believed to be good for one's fellow man."

The extracts given above show something of the attitude of the clergy to the people as well as of the people to religion and to them, but others may be added. To 'bridge the gulf' is the dream of one who is determined that his church shall not be 'a paddock of the well-to-do.' Another speaks of all his work as tending to the recognition of the Church as the centre of a system. He is determined, he says, to make the people know that their Church is in their midst. 'District visiting,' says one, 'is the unique heritage of the Church of England.' But 'general visitation,' declares another, 'is of little importance.' 'House-to-house visitation only amounts to throwing in a tract.' 'The important thing is to visit regularly and constantly those closely connected with the Church or whom there is some prospect of influencing.' Another speaks of district visiting as 'waste of time,' and references are frequent to the perfunctory character of much visitation which 'does not go beyond the doorstep.' Such phrases as 'whole parish' visited' are pronounced to be 'bunkum.' Systematic visiting is arranged, 'but breaks down.' 'As to visiting we all break down over that.' Nor is the quality of much

that is done satisfactory. Visitors are 'neither wise as serpents nor harmless as doves.' 'Good visitors are rare.' Moreover, the view is expressed that 'the unpopularity of the Church is partly due to the right claimed of visiting anywhere.' The people, it is quaintly said, 'bear it with the greatest fortitude.'

In visiting personally, the clergy are conscious of many difficulties. 'I visit, as vicar, but many don't like it; the best off especially will do anything to keep away from religion.' One very sensitive man calls it 'a most hateful task.' The difficulty specially applies to the introduction of religious topics, and this is often frankly given up. One says plainly that when visiting he 'never bothers people about religion,' and many leave it for the visited to broach the subject. Another 'would think it an impertinence to go in and kneel down and pray as some do;' he 'prefers to be unprofessional, fearing lest he should encourage insincerity.' In contradistinction to this a High Churchman speaks of the gratitude that is felt by men when the wall of reserve is broken down, but adds that to do it requires pluck, and that friendship and confidence must first be secured; and very many say 'there is more latent religion than is imagined.' . . .

It is very apt to remain latent, and there are complaints of the 'increasing numbers of those who go to church without committing themselves so far as to take a pew or pay any regular subscription, and,' it is added, 'do not make it up in the offertory:' 'mean people who like to get religion for nothing, and for that reason prefer open churches.' One who has made his church free and open is doubtful how it will work out: 'the working men aimed at do not stream in; among church-goers wandering increases and income suffers.'

The criticism passed by the clergy on themselves

and on each other is no less frank and outspoken. 'The weakness of the Church,' says one, 'is the habit of advertisement and love of applause, especially the Low Church. You can run your Church on commercial lines, and get a kind of success, but it is "buying gold too dear."' 'Exaggeration,' says another, 'is the bane of the Church, resulting in competition to show numbers.' For God's work there is, says a third, 'too much of the feeling "this is grist for my mill."'

'The Church,' we are told, 'has been weakened and its spiritual power destroyed' during the last thirty years by pauperising the people. We find one vicar congratulating himself on the fact that by his refusal to continue their doles 'A * * * *'s old humbugs have been shed off.' On this point some of the judgments are particularly severe. 'When the Church,' says one, 'does seem to get hold it is by lavish expenditure. 'Its influence,' says another, 'is based almost entirely on expectation of some temporal benefit.'

Even when the social side of the work is not condemned it is often regarded as unsatisfactory. One, speaking of his own work, says it exercises 'a civilizing effect through schools, Sisters and visitors, but that its spiritual influence is *nil*.' The clergy are partly led and partly constrained, to throw themselves into social activities, although to do so interferes with higher work; 'but you must provide amusement for dull and lonely lives.' The connection with religion is not very close. 'Social methods may get people to church, but do not make Christians of them.' The 'Missa Cantata with seven minutes' sermon' is denounced, and 'even more disastrous are the auxiliary methods sometimes resorted to—cards, smoking, dramatic performances and entertainments.' 'Doing God's work with the Devil's tools.' 'Large open clubs,' it is said, 'almost always bring discredit on the Church, which becomes identified with an

institution which at its best is mainly given over to billiards, drinking, and gambling, in however mild a form.' 'The aim of social work,' says another, 'speaking more generally, 'is religious, but I do not ram religion down their throats.' 'Working men can be won, but it's no use slamming the Bible in their face.' And, finally, it is said that 'the clergy are above the heads of the people; neither the service nor the preaching are understood.'

'Even the best men are sometimes depressed by their surroundings,' but some feel this more than others, and frankly express their disgust at the dull vulgarity of the necessary entertainments, or impatience with mothers' meetings, &c. Sensitive men have often a bad time. 'No one,' says one of these, 'is asked to come to church, nor why he stays away: I ought to, but I can't.' Another is painfully conscious that 'clubs lower the moral tone of those who manage them;' and this is repeated in another quarter: 'You try to raise the factory girls, but it is they who lower you.' But with most a more genial view prevails, as with one who 'hates the whole system of bribery by treats, but yet wishes the women to have their outing, and hear the cuckoo again.' If they can't afford it, 'what,' he asks, 'can you do but pay for them?'

Those of the clergy who have had a previous business training value it greatly, and wish that all could have it. The failure of the Church they attribute to the lack of common sense among its servants, and this it is thought is mainly the result of their training. 'Amazingly unwise,' is an expression used. 'The people,' says one vicar, 'are not tired of religion, but tired of those who interpret it.' He seems to think the clergy over-cultivated, and is himself plastic in suiting himself to the demands of his parishioners, even congratulating himself, so it is said, 'on being 'a bit of a cad.' It may be a low ideal, but he does

not stand alone in the endeavour to suit his wares to his customers : evening communions or processions, as the case may be. Another and a very different ideal is suggested by the description given in our own note-books of one who seemed 'the fitting minister of a great church which asks for dignity and kindliness as much as for beauty and spirituality of life.'

It is said also that 'the men who draw the congregations are the men with great gifts—the stars—but we have not all got great gifts, and perhaps the less gifted men who attend to study and to visiting and gather a devoted staff of workers round them do as much or more in the long run as the stars.' And it is claimed that the church with 'its plodding parochial work' has a more lasting influence than the Nonconformists : that the 'parish system tends to make it more powerful.'

It is very wisely held that 'to begin small is the only true road to success.' The folly of building large churches in poor parishes is denounced ; and in another place it is pointed out that 'the workers, not the building, are wanted.' 'To cultivate his little plot,' is for one a sufficing ambition, and by him love and goodwill seem to be already garnered. Another speaks of his flock as 'not great in numbers, but unusually faithful and religious, without ulterior motives and unswayed by fashion.' The object in beginning small is to create a 'nucleus which will recruit itself and never die, being independent of change of minister.' 'Religious influence' is described by one as being 'small on the mass, but great on the inner band of adherents,' who are 'the centre of life, the kernel of the church.' That each church merely forms a nucleus is repeated more than once. 'The nucleus is spiritual, the penumbra social.' 'The small band of workers are simply heroic.' And it is to be noted that they are mostly drawn from the lower middle and working class.

Whatever the shape it takes, 'the vigour of the Church is enormous ; there used to be many idle clergy, now there are none.' This vigour, which is undoubted (though not quite so universal as this witness puts it), is reflected in the demand for unmarried men and young men to carry on the work. Much of the need for freshness and youthfulness in the clergy springs from the continual cry for something new ; for a change in the agencies employed. The method adopted to meet this is 'to drop anything that shows signs of failing.' The people, it is averred, 'have no grip, and can only be held in this way,' but it is hard on those whose buoyancy begins to fail, and with even the most buoyant it must react in depression ; add to this the constant anxiety as to finance under which many if not most live, and it is evident that the life of the clergy is no bed of roses.

There is little room here for any jealousy of the younger generation. One incumbent, 'not helped by self-deception,' says no man should stay in one parish over ten years. "Feeling, as I do, that a clergyman may remain too long," writes another in an address to his people. A third puts the limit at five years, and gives as his reason that 'an impression is made only by spurts ; something new must continually be started ; and in five years a man comes to the end of his spurting powers. Subsequently any life is due to curates.'

Very different is the ideal expressed by one who claimed to have won his position by having seen parishioners through every phase—'baptized, married, and buried.'

There are many types, and room in the Church for all.

§ 5

CHURCH AND CLASS

An excellent way of estimating an influence would be to imagine the results of its withdrawal, if we could at the same time assume that it was not replaced. But in the present case the vacancy would be speedily occupied by other religious organizations. What I desire to indicate, however, is the work actually done, and the influence actually exerted, by the Church, not the loss or gain that would result if what is under the present system, were to be compared with what conceivably *might be* under some other system—and the same rule must be applied in estimating the work of other Churches—without regard to the probability that the vacancy left by the withdrawal or decay of any one of them would be quickly followed by a development of others. What I shall try to show is the special part *now* played by each : by the Established Church generally, and by each branch of it ; and also by each of the Nonconformist denominations in their turn.

The value to the Church of the logical and geographical completeness of the parish system has been referred to, and it is certain that it might be made much more effective if a broader view prevailed and a more sympathetic spirit were shown towards other branches of the Christian Church. But in spite of a regrettable narrowness of conception in this respect and in spite of great looseness in the parochial tie even among Churchmen, the fact that everyone belongs to some parish, and can claim the services of the Church, goes for something in establishing and maintaining a common recognition of God's laws. But this common recognition breaks up over details, and, studied in detail, the question of class comes in to complicate that of religious system, so that, as regards the Church of England alone, with

five classes and an equal variety of Church methods (as classified by us) there come to be a formidable array of combinations.

The five groups into which, as already stated, I divide the churches are High, Low, Broad, essentially Individual and markedly Parochial. The five classes which we have recognised are wealth (with fashion), upper middle class (without fashion), lower middle class, regular wage earners, and the poor. A certain number of parishes are very uniform in class. There are those with hardly any but wealthy and fashionable residents with their servants and immediate retainers, and those in which almost all are 'poor'; others are of strictly working class, and there are some, again, in which the different grades of middle class are found to the practical exclusion of every other section. Such homogeneous parishes are, however, comparatively rare. More commonly two or perhaps three classes live side by side, and the combinations in which these classes are found in the same district greatly affect the work of the Church.

With the rich and the fashionable the Established Church up to a certain point has an easy task. In districts inhabited by this class, the services of the Church of whatever type are almost always stately, if not ornate, and are well attended. Appeals for money meet with a liberal response. Some who give may be 'purses without souls,' and may be moved to attend church by fashion only, but this is far from generally true, and there are always others to whom religion is the bread of their lives, and who under its impulse devote themselves to Christian work. Yet, as a pervading spiritual force capable of uplifting the mass of its adherents, the Church of England fails even among the rich. Except as regards these chosen spirits, the Church does not get beyond recognition as the representative of religion. Among the churches of the rich,

as between High and Low, Broad, essentially Individual, or markedly Parochial, I can find little difference in the numbers they attract or the influence they exert, and the choice among them, no less than the attendance, is mainly dictated by fashion. Eloquence invariably attracts crowds, but this, too, is largely a matter of fashion. Many may be moved, but few are held. The influence passes to some other voice.

Of all the various possible combinations of class the simplest is that of rich and poor in one parish. The work of the clergy seems then to lie clearly before them, and all the social dictates of Christianity to come into play. But there is found to be difficulty in their application; the position proves less simple than it at first seemed. The poor can indeed be visited, but they cannot be induced to come to church. It is too fine for them, their clothes are not good enough, they would feel ashamed. Excuses such as these are made for them as well as by them. Their homes are probably at some distance from the church. A smaller church or mission hall must be built. It shall be their own, and then they will come. But they do not. Meanwhile their poverty has met with compassion, and those who visit in the name of Christianity seek to relieve the distress they find. The two duties seem to be naturally, and even divinely, combined. The heart is softened, gratitude is felt, and in this mood the poor are pointed to God. Sin is rebuked, virtue extolled, and warning words are spoken against drunkenness, extravagance and folly. Advice, assistance and rebuke are all accepted, and the recipient is urged to turn to where alone strength can be found and to no longer neglect the observances of religion. But alas for human nature, charitable gifts lead to cadging and spiritual counsel to hypocrisy. The simple ideal embodied in the phrase 'a nice lot of poor' upon whom may be exercised the Christian virtues of the

rich, has to be abandoned. Some new principle of action must be sought and it may be found. But only if the greatest care is taken to avoid pauperism or patronage, subservience or class hostility, can the living together of rich and poor in one parish be to the advantage of both. If success is achieved, then from both alike are drawn those devout and equal souls to whom religion supplies a satisfying spring of living energy. The attainment of success such as this does not depend on doctrinal position. It seems rather to depend on a combination of sound sense, philanthropic enthusiasm and deep religious feeling which, though it may not hang on every bush, is not so rare as might be supposed. It is found especially among highly educated people irrespective, happily, of any particular religious beliefs. The commanding presence of men of this type among ministers of religion is more common in the Church of England than elsewhere; but nowhere is it very frequent, and in the work of these mixed parishes failure is more usual than success.

Parishes in which 'all are poor' are more often found in the language of appeal than that of fact, unless the ordinary independent working class be included with the poor; but there are not a few in which the poor outnumber all the rest. In such parishes the High Church section is more successful than any other. They bring to their work a greater force of religious enthusiasm, which, curiously, is also more definitely professional both for men and women. Evidently self-denying lives appeal, as I have said, to the imagination of the people. Some working men come to their services. The poor are genuinely interested. The charities of the Church are sweetened, and hypocrisy is perhaps left behind. We shall find a parallel to this in the success of the Wesleyan Mission work under similar conditions, doctrine only

excepted. But in both cases the churches themselves are largely filled by people from other districts and of higher class, attracted by the stir of religious life.

A similar success, though less *éclatant* in character, may be won by the solitary self-denying man, living for and with his people; especially if, as sometimes happens, he finds in his neighbourhood a few others, men and women, who indeed fill no office and wear no garb, but who share his work and imbibe its spirit. In these cases the church, indeed, may remain empty, but still the people are touched by a wholesome religious influence. The work of all the rest under similar circumstances of a widely diffused poverty is, as a rule, stamped with failure.

Passing next to parishes which are entirely, or almost entirely, occupied by a regular wage-earning class, it must be admitted that all branches of the Church of England fail alike. It is, I suppose, this more than anything which troubles the Church; but as the failure is not particular to the Church of England I leave the subject till later, merely remarking that such exceptions, or partial exceptions, as can be noted, base the degree of success they can claim on the adoption of democratic methods. Wherever the regular working class is found, and in whatever proportion to the rest of the inhabitants, it seems equally impervious to the claims of religion as it is set before them; and as this class inclines downwards towards the poor or upwards towards the lower middle, so is the attitude of the one class or the other towards religion shared. By this the strict and remarkable influence of class on religious observance in England is very clearly shown.

Districts which are inhabited entirely by the middle classes, upper and lower, are not unsatisfactory for the Church except in comparison with the Nonconformists, who are still more successful. It is by adopting the

methods of the Congregationalists that the Church succeeds, and this any branch of the Church of England can do.

With a mixed population of several classes the Church of England is seen to the greatest advantage. Amongst such a population there are always some natural church-goers. Social influences bring others. There is work to be done for those who wish to do it. Endowments help. Under these circumstances the High Church draws those whom the doctrine and ritual suit from far as well as near, while the Low Church also gathers in its special supporters. In addition, great eloquence or exceptional energy or beautiful music will anywhere bring a congregation together. The more special the attraction, however, the slighter the connection between congregation and parish is apt to be. The organization may be that of a parish, but the church can hardly be considered as a parish church. Still, when under these conditions, with a mixed population, we do find a great local congregation, a culmination is reached which best represents the true spirit of the Established Church of England. Then if exaggerated ecclesiastical pretensions are abandoned, the church becomes a real centre of spiritual life as well as of moral force, not merely for an eclectic body of sympathisers, but for the whole of its community.

§ 6

CHURCH AND DOCTRINE

The variety of doctrines taught within the Church of England is very great, and, with any unbiassed onlooker, must go far to undermine the importance that can be attached to any one of them in particular as a necessary foundation of religious influence. And this doubt becomes the stronger when we remember how far the Church, even with these wide differences, is from covering the field of honest, earnest, Protestant Christianity.

But whether particular beliefs be necessary or not, their whole-hearted acceptance certainly is. The value of the influence exerted may depend on the character of the doctrine, but its force depends on the intensity of conviction with which the belief is held, and it is the relation of various doctrines to different types or conditions of mind, with the result on character and conduct, as manifested in London, that I desire to depict.

Those of the clergy who hold High Church views claim that their successes spring largely from the definiteness of their teaching. They say that this quality appeals even more to men and boys than to women and girls. What they teach is extremely simple : that, Christ the Son of God, and Himself being God, having died on the cross to pay the debt of man's sinfulness, made provision of the means of grace for all mankind through His Church and its sacraments ; and that to reject these means is to reject salvation. The sacraments of the Church include an ever fresh offering and acceptance of the body and blood of Christ on the altar of God, together with their reverent consumption as spiritual food. For this and the other sacraments an ordained priesthood is absolutely necessary, and by this two-fold claim we

reach an exclusive, though no doubt contentious definition of 'the Church.'

Baptism and Confirmation acquire their utmost value as the doors of a Church which thus claims a monopoly of the way of salvation ; while the conviction of sin and regeneration, to which appeal is made, is held in this case (as in others) to stamp the whole system with divine approval. Salvation is a fact, and salvation is of God. Salvation is the work of the Church ; the Church is of God and the priest is His minister. All stands firmly linked together.

The priest is not only necessary for due exercise of the appointed rites of the Church, which form, if I may say so, the framework of salvation, and responsible for enabling and urging all to fulfil their religious duties, but it is for him also to heighten and guide that life of the soul for the comfort and strengthening of which the sacraments of the Church have been instituted. It is his office not only to enforce the conviction of sin and bring about the experiences of regeneration, but to control conduct and thought from day to day. Hence the need for the system of the confessional and the powers of absolution, which, too, spiritual experience may be held to stamp with the seal of divine approval, writing on the dust of our hearts the words : "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Go and sin no more."

It is natural that the position of priest carrying with it duties so high and powers so wonderful, should exercise a great attraction, and accordingly we find most of the young men who take Orders, and especially the keenest spirits among them, ranged on the side of the High Church. The more exclusive the interpretation of their functions and the higher the ritual, the easier it is to obtain the number of curates required, and they bring to their work an unequalled spirit of devotion. On the clergy the effect of these doctrines and practices seems almost

entirely good. Subordination amongst themselves is easy, mutual confidence complete, and saintly lives spring from the soil. At a little distance it is easy to feel contempt for imitations of Rome, to laugh at Church millinery, or scoff at 'men in coloured garments sprawling before the altar.' But coming close, we find beneath all this a true spirit of religion, and as such it is undoubtedly recognised by the people, even by those who care nothing for the doctrines and to whom the ceremonial is idle show.

There are, however, always some who care, some who respond as the priests would have them, some to whom the game is a reality and the stake eternal life; and though far more women than men are touched, it is men who are most deeply affected. Nowhere in London can such devout behaviour and such apparent intensity of religious feeling be seen as in the congregations which gather in the High Churches. Nor are the numbers small compared to other church congregations. Other causes contribute: pomp of ritual touches some, beauty of music or of architecture others; but on the soul of the most casual attender an impression is made that 'this is holy ground.'

The men who find satisfaction for their religious nature in the High Church are of a quite peculiar type. I cannot think it a strong type, and the idea that on these lines the world of men could ever be won is utterly untenable. If all those who reject this road will be lost, then will most of us inevitably suffer that fate. The influence exercised on the male sex is indeed strong, but is very limited. With women it is more diffused, and with children it reaches its greatest numerical success. On this success, as we have said, great hopes for the future are built. Give us, they say, the children of to-day and in another generation we shall have the fathers and mothers

also. Meanwhile, the High Church as a distinct branch of the Church of England is able to find men to teach her doctrines who unreservedly accept and, I suppose, unfeignedly believe them, and knows how to stimulate her servants to the highest point of devotion in her cause.

The Evangelical body within the Church of England has fallen on difficult times. The stream of religious feeling and tendency (in London at any rate) has flowed on either side and left their churches stranded. Individual cases there are where the eloquence of some striking personality has forced a way through and brought thousands under the influence of his voice. These have been mentioned in their places. Such successes only emphasize the general failure.

The doctrine of salvation purchased by the blood of Christ and free to all believing souls was supposed in a general way to have been duly received by Christian countries, marred only by the errors and scandals of the Church of Rome, against which it appeared that denunciation was the sole course open. Thus the main duty of Christians was to hasten the millennium by compassing the conversion of the Jews and by spreading the good tidings among the heathen. The result was a blindly self-satisfied piety, hiding its head in the sand, narrow in its sympathies and entirely out of touch with life. To a world that demands vitality these old-fashioned Evangelical churches continue to offer a worn-out presentment of the Gospel, lacking the power to move anyone. Disregarded at home, such energy as still abides goes out to foreign missions which indeed were never more active than now, though if the millennium is to await the acceptance of the Gospel by all mankind it grows (humanly speaking) more and more manifestly remote. Apart from this work and these hopes, the more active spirits join themselves to the living forces of Evangelicalism, which lie mainly

outside of the Church of England, and find expression in the missions of revivalist effort.

The patent failure of the heavy stereotyped methods of these churches, so entirely out of tune with our times, has, however, had a singularly stimulating effect in many directions. To it, by way of rebound, is owing much of the High Church enthusiasm ; to it also may be credited the success achieved by Moody and Sankey and other evangelists ; and to it perhaps we owe the rise of the Salvation Army. New methods were sought. Religious feelings found new vents.

The general movement of taste and habit in religion, as well as in life generally, has been in the direction of greater brightness ; and few even of the Evangelical churches have shrunk from such innovations as the use of a surpliced choir. Nearly all of these have swept away the old pulpit and the old pews, and rearranged their buildings so that the choir and clergy occupy a chancel at the back of which, in place of high altar, stands the table of the Lord. Many, slipping away from old-fashioned Evangelical habits, have found in music a possible development. Where a parson has music in his soul it is a development which comes very naturally, for care will be given to the selection of good musicians as organist and choir-master, and then, on Sunday evening especially, music is sure to become gradually more and more the life of the service. The influence exerted in this way is not very deep, but it is sweet and wholesome as far as it goes. Such services attract young people. 'It is delightful,' said one of the clergy, 'to see so many couples who sing out of one book.'

The Broad Church offers thought rather than doctrine, and cool judgment rather than exaltation ; its influence is rather on the world of intellect and practical action than on that of religious feeling. It attracts as adherents neither the ardent few nor the

careless many. As regards the clergy, some who belong to this school break away from orthodoxy, but remain within the Church, while others leave it, and it is still doubtful which course is right or which gives them the greater power.

Of the churches stamped by individuality of some kind little more need be said. The doctrine taught may incline this way or that, towards High or Low or Broad. It seems to make no difference. To gather a congregation some attraction must be offered, good music or good preaching, or parochial affection. The influence exerted depends on the character of the incumbent, but on the whole amongst these churches the most successful are the most parochial, and so we are led back to those great parochial institutions which above all appear to me to represent the true spirit of our National Church.

CHAPTER II

ILLUSTRATIONS—CHURCH OF ENGLAND

(Being selections from reports and other printed documents)

THE reader will kindly bear in mind that the extracts given in this and some succeeding chapters do not, in themselves, provide a complete picture or balanced statement, but are to be regarded solely as illustrations, corresponding in this respect to the extracts from our note-books which have been given in the preceding volumes. They will, I think, be found to be of extraordinary interest. They represent many points of view and many divergent principles of action, and have been selected mainly as developing powerfully or characteristically the particular position taken up. Thus they tend to extremes, whether as regards the methods of action indicated, or the statement of the underlying principles, or the view taken of the special question or situation with which they deal: as, for instance, the attitude of the people towards religion, the place of religion in their lives, and the claims of the Church or its priesthood.

Remarks have been selected, it may be for their wisdom and penetration, or for their transparent fatuity; for the breadth or narrowness of their sympathy; because they strike the note of confidence or of despondency, or convey the humble admission of failure

which is opposed to both of these. Amongst such opposites no average is possible, and it may be that what must be accounted the more common and, in that sense, the average type is inadequately represented by these extracts, and above all, that they may fail to give the reader an idea of the excellence and value of the best kind of ordinary work. This could only be done by reproducing, *in extenso*, whole reports which, in unsensational business-like language, give a detailed statement of the work and its needs, often occupying many pages, concluding with well-arranged and carefully audited accounts, and the whole preceded by a thoughtful address, taking, perhaps, the form of a letter to "my dear people." The descriptive words, "an excellent specimen of a parish report," occur very frequently on my notes, and I would beg my readers to accept it as a fact that excellent, honest, useful parish work is being done in all parts of London.

The sources, or the character of the source, from which the extracts have been drawn are, in most cases, indicated. They have been divided into sections according to the subjects dealt with.

§ 1 .

PARISH ORGANIZATION AND METHODS OF WORK

(1) The following specimen is no exceptional list of operations, and is merely referred to in our notes as "an admirably succinct account." It gives a fair idea of the ordinary machinery at work in a rather poor parish, of some size, actively conducted on High,

but not extreme lines. The particulars are taken from an annual report :—

St. * * * * *, its Workers, Services, &c.

CLERGY—The Rev. * * * * *; The Rev. * * * * *; The Rev. * * * * *.

CHURCHWARDENS—Mr. * * * * * and Mr. * * * * *.

SIDESMEN, 12; **SACRISTANS**, 5; **SERVERS**, 5; **CHOIR**, 34.

DISTRICT VISITORS, 35; all living in the parish, being the wives and sisters of our working people.

A **SICK NURSE** and mission woman.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, 45; number of children nearly 700.

DAY SCHOOLS—Head governess and 6 assistant teachers.

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIX WORKERS in all, besides those serving on committees.

Services.

Sundays—7 a.m., Holy Communion; 8 a.m., Holy Communion; 10.30 a.m., Litany; 11 a.m., Matins; 11.30 a.m., Choral Eucharist and Sermon; 3.45 p.m., Catechising; 4.15 p.m., Holy Baptism and Churching; 7 p.m., Evensong.

Weekdays—7.15 a.m., Holy Communion; 7.45 a.m., Matins; 7.30 p.m., Evensong.

Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays at 11 a.m.

Address every Thursday at Evensong.

Holy Baptism and Churchings every Thursday at 7 p.m.

Children's Services on the first Sunday in the month at 3.15 p.m., also at 9.15 a.m. on Saints' Days.

Saints' Days—Holy Communion at 6.30 a.m. and 7.15 a.m.

Special Services of Preparation for Holy Communion monthly for senior and junior communicants.

Magic-Lantern Services in Lent and Advent.

Sunday Schools every Sunday at 3 p.m.

St. * * * * * 's Guild of Intercession—Object: to help its members to pray for: 1. The Church abroad; 2. The Church at home; 3. One another. The Office is said each *Friday* before the *second* Sunday in the month, and members are invited to make their Communion together at one of the early celebrations on that Sunday.

St. * * * * * 's Guild (senior)—Object: To interest its members in the work of the Church in Japan. Meetings on the first Thursday in each month in the club room.

Sr. * * * * * 's Guild (junior)—Object: To interest our children in the Japan Mission.

Sr. * * * * * 's Guild (Young Women)—Object: To help its members to keep a simple rule of life. Meetings held quarterly in church.

Bible classes—For *Elder Lads*, on Sundays, in the mission house, at 3 p.m. For *Young Women*, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., in the club room.

St. * * * * * 's Men's Social Club (for Senior Men)—The club room adjoining * * * * * Schools is open every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 7 to 10.30 p.m. Subscriptions 1d per week, with an entrance fee of 6d.

*** * * * * Church Club** (for Young Men over 16)—Meets at the schools, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Young Women's Club (for Young Women not under 15)—Meets on Mondays in club room from 8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Choir Boys' Club—For regular Members of the Choir. Meets on Saturdays in the parish room from 8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Band of Hope—Open to any Children in the parish; meets in the mission hall on Wednesdays, from 6 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. About two hundred members.

Guild of Hope—Object: to keep together those Young Men and Young Women who have left the Band of Hope.

Mothers' Meetings—In the mission hall, on Mondays and Tuesdays at 2 p.m. (Number of Mothers, over two hundred.)

Penny Bank—In the schools on Mondays at 7 p.m.

Sick Club—Meets on Mondays in the schools at 8 p.m. (A Thrift Society and Sick Club, one hundred and forty members.)

Starr-Bowkett Building Society—Meets on Mondays, in the infant school, at 7 p.m.

Parochial Library—Open every Friday in the mission hall, * * * * * Street, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. One halfpenny per volume.

Church Shop—For the sale of Bibles, Prayer Books, Hymn Books, pictures, texts, photographs, &c., &c., open every Thursday at the vicarage at 6.30 p.m., and again after Evensong.

Magazine—The *St. * * * * 's Magazine*, bound up with the *Church Monthly*, is published every month, and may be had of the District Visitors. Price three halfpence.

The magazine, which is very bright and original, is, as stated above, bound up with the *Church Monthly*, a publication largely used to provide interesting illustrated matter for inside sheets, other publications similarly used being *Home Words*, *Dawn of Day*, *Banner of Faith*, &c. To these inner sheets the particular parish adds its own cover, and next the cover such news or notices or exhortations as parish doings may afford or require.

In spite of considerable interest and literary merit and a low price (usually one penny and not the three halfpence charged in this case) the sale as a rule is very limited and a loss is frequently the result, showing an "ugly balance on the wrong side" in the accounts. "Can anyone tell us how to make a magazine pay?" asks one vicar; while another issues the cheering report that the circulation is increasing, 273 copies having been "got rid of" for the past month. The cases in which a profit is made are rare, and in spite of the obvious usefulness of the magazines in connection with district visiting, and as a more solid form of advertising, many churches adopt by preference the gratuitous issue of leaflets,

(2) The following extract gives a fairly full list of the subsidiary institutions of an ordinary parish :—

In connection with the church there are also many useful institutions. Amongst these are guilds for men and boys, women and girls, gymnasium, cricket clubs, sewing classes, band of hope (senior and junior), mothers' meetings, provident club, lending library, penny bank, dispensary, maternity and Dorcas societies. During the winter the charities include needlework society, invalid's dinner and soup kitchen. Tickets for these are distributed through the district visitors.—(*From the "Vicar's Letter" in Annual Report.*)

(3) The number of church services held in different parishes varies to a remarkable extent. In the following extract particulars are given of those arranged in a High Church parish, where the population consists of working-class and poor people :—

There is a daily celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 7 a.m., followed by Matins. On Wednesdays and Fridays Litany and intercessions for the parish are said at 9.30 a.m. Evensong is said daily at 7 p.m., except on Wednesdays, when the Office is choral, and followed by a sermon.

• On Sundays the Blessed Sacrament is celebrated at 8 a.m. Matins is sung at 10.45, followed by a choral celebration of the Holy Eucharist with sermon. To this service, children attending morning Sunday school are brought by their teachers, and, with the adults present, form a congregation nearly filling the church. Once a month there is a service for children, with catechising, at 3.30 p.m. Holy Baptism is administered every Sunday at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Evensong and sermon are at 7 p.m., generally with a full church. In Advent and Lent we have a short reading or meditation at daily Matins and Evensong, with special mission services on Wednesday evenings.

Thus it will be seen we have, on an average, about twenty-five services a week, without counting extra services in connection with the parochial guilds and the fasts and festivals.

On Holy Days the church choir boys have this year begun to attend the 7 o'clock celebration, and sing hymns in the course of the Office. This plain celebration of the Holy Mysteries with hymns is a most congregational service, and has been found to be very helpful for our people. The church is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for private prayer.

(4) Specimens of the rules of a few parochial organizations follow:—

(a) *Guilds and Communicants' Classes (High Church).*

1. For women we have the Guild of St. Helena, numbering one hundred members, and worked by the Sisters. The members communicate monthly. A meeting to prepare for Holy Communion is held once a month at the Sister's House.

2. For girls we have the Guild of St. Michael and Holy Cross, also worked by the Sisters, and numbering eighty members. They also make their communions monthly, and have a meeting once a month to prepare. These guilds are a great help to our women and girls.

3. For boys we have the Guild of the Good Shepherd, with its separate wards for boys who have and who have not been confirmed. From St. Peter's ward (for the confirmed) we draw our altar servers. The ward of St. Cyril is for younger boys.

4. For all communicants, we have three times a year a general meeting in church, and a ward of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament which meets once in each month.

5. To our sacristan I am indebted for the formation and management of an altar servers' guild, which is a great means of deepening the spiritual life of those assisting at the altar and in processions.

(b) *Copy of Card of Membership of a High Church Guild.*

• *Rules of the Guild of St.* * * * * *

1. To receive the Holy Communion once at least in every month. •

2. To prepare before receiving and give thanks after.

3. To pray for the members of the guild.

Name

I have much pleasure in stating that I have kept the rules this month.

NOTE.

If you have kept the rules of the guild, please put this card in the red box at the church, or in the letter-box at the clergy house, or you may send it to the vicar by post.

If you have been unable to keep the rules, you may, if you like, write the reasons on the back of the card.

If the card is not returned, the vicar will understand that the rules have not been kept.

If you do not get this card sent you every month, please tell the vicar, or write to him about it.

The next Devotional meeting will be on Sunday,

The next Guild Sunday is

(c) Mothers' Union Rules (Broad Church).

1. To try, by God's help, to make children obedient, truthful, and pure.

2. Never to allow coarse jests, bad, angry words, or low talk in the house. To speak gently.

3. Never to give children beer, wine or spirits, without the doctor's orders, or to send young people to the public-house.

4. Not to allow girls to go about the streets at night, and to keep them from dangerous amusements.

5. To be careful that children do not read bad books or police reports.

6. To set them a good example in word and deed.

7. To kneel down and pray to God morning and evening, and teach children to pray.

8. To try to read a few verses of the Bible daily, and to come to church as regularly as possible.

*Hon. Sec., Mrs. * * * * **

(5) Sunday School System—

"The Catechism" in some form is becoming more common, partly because of the difficulty of securing efficient Sunday school teachers, but especially for the sake of the more definite teaching that can, it is

thought, be given by the new system which is described in the following extract :—

The expression “the Catechism” is used to mean the service at which the elder boys and girls of a parish are instructed in the Christian faith. The instruction is, of course, based upon the Prayer Book catechism, but the whole of the service is called “the Catechism,” and the scholars are said to go to “Catechism,” or to belong to “the Catechism.”

The rubric directs that children, apprentices, &c., shall be taught in church by the parish priests on Sunday afternoon, and the plan adopted at the Catechism is, shortly, as follows :—boys and girls over ten (or sometimes over eleven) instead of going to Sunday school come straight to church, where each one has his or her allotted seat. Every row is under a monitor, and every four rows under a superior monitor. The instruction is given by one of the clergy, and follows a systematic course extending, perhaps, over three years ; so that, supposing a boy to enter “the Catechism” at eleven, and stay till he is seventeen (quite a common experience) he will have had the course twice over. It is emphatically not a “children’s service” in the ordinary sense of the word, and, consequently, the elder boys and girls, who are not very easily attracted to these, are found to come gladly and readily to “the Catechism.” A very special feature is the quarterly festival, when the ordinary routine gives way to a bright and happy little service of rejoicing, and the quarterly rewards are announced and given to those who have earned them.

The ordinary “Sunday school” is, however, much more frequently found. The following gives an exact account of such a school, carefully organized :—

When Mr. * * * * * left us I became chaplain of the Sunday school, and it is one of the most pleasant parts of my work. We have a large staff of teachers, for whom there is a fortnightly preparation class. The lesson is given with the help of a black board, and three set questions are given, and taught word for word to the children. The infant teachers have a lesson on the same

subject, but it is in a simple form, and is broken up into two parts. The infants learn a verse from a hymn on the subject instead of the set questions. The boys' and girls' schools take it in turn to meet in church and in the upper schoolroom. On the fourth Sunday all departments meet in church. On ordinary Sundays the children who assemble in church are arranged in their classes at three o'clock, then we all kneel and say an opening prayer; after that for twenty-five minutes the children are taught the set questions by their teachers. At 3.25 I come into the church again, and a hymn is sung. The set questions are then heard, and a few questions explaining them are asked, then another hymn and a short office. Then the lesson is gone through—the lesson, it must be remembered, which was taught the Sunday before by the teachers in class in the schoolroom, and which was given to the teachers on the Friday before that at the teachers' class. Some of the elder children take notes, while the lesson is being given in church, on paper prepared by one of the teachers and attached to a piece of millboard. Tucked under this sheet of paper is a double sheet which the children take home in a cover provided for them. On this at home they write from memory a short analysis of what the lesson was about, and bring it in a second cover to school next Sunday. Marks are given for analyses, and each child keeps in a proper cover, a complete file of all the analyses he or she has presented.

This is the ordinary plan of teaching in Church Sunday schools now. I only set it out at length because I want parents and subscribers to know exactly what we do.—*(From the Vicar's Letter in the Annual Report of a mainly working-class parish.)*

(C) *Value of the Confessional.*

Then as to the number of confessions made. To my mind this is by far the truest test of progress of spiritual work. And this is certainly increasingly becoming better proportioned to the Communions made—even more amongst men and lads, as I have before more than once noted, than amongst women and girls.—*(From the Annual Letter of the Vicar of a poor parish.)*

(7) *The Obligations of Communicants.*

It is from our band of communicants that we draw our Church workers, who form the backbone of our work. They are, as a rule, the only people in the parish to whom the clergy can look for helpers in their work. But they are also a source of anxiety. Anxiously indeed do we look at such times as the great festivals for some in recent years brought to confirmation, and to the resolution to walk in newness of life—only to find them absent from the altar for the first time since their confirmation. This is a sure sign that a time of trouble is beginning, which may end by their falling away altogether. Many do, in spite of every effort to recover them, become lapsed communicants, apparently beyond recovery. But many bravely—how bravely, only God’s priests know—again and again renew their efforts after the higher life.—(*From the Annual Letter of the Vicar of a working-class and poor parish.*)

(8) *Reaching the men.*

We try to reach every man in the parish by some means or other. Once a quarter or so, envelopes are addressed, containing an invitation to every man in the parish, the names having been got by our own and the committee’s visiting. The formation of a parish register is of paramount importance. It is most useful and, like everything else, involves labour. Ours was ruled like this :—

No. of House	Road.	No. in Family.	Denomination.	Any likely Con- firmees.	Any Communi- cants.	Children Sunday School.	Men's Service.	Women's Ser- vice.	Children to be baptized	Occupation.	Remarks.

All these particulars cannot be got by one visit or two, but bit by bit the book is finished.—(*From "Fishers of Men."*)

(c) *Remarks concerning Special Missions.*

(a) *Notice of a "Mission" to be held in a large parish occupied by lower middle and working-class people (letter issued as a leaflet).*

MY DEAR PEOPLE,—A mission is to be held, God willing, in our parish early next year. The Bishop of London desires, as you will see by his letter, a copy of which is sent to you, to express his deep sympathy with us in this work.

A mission is a course of Special Services with addresses and sermons to all, intended to arouse the careless and to strengthen those who are already in earnest. The Rev. Canon * * * * *, who has had great experience in this special work, has promised to conduct the mission, and he has the express sanction of our Bishop.

We want you, one and all, to serve God better. A mission is simply a time set apart for making an earnest effort to do this, and experience teaches us that God does grant blessings at such times. We ask you to put such questions as these to yourselves: "Am I content with myself as I am? If not, may I not gain some help from the mission? May I not learn some things I don't know? May it not help me to make a fresh start, to fight better against my besetting sins, to resist temptation better than I have done?" If it does any of these things for us, we shall be thankful for the mission. But you must understand that it is a beginning, not an end. It will not put everything right at once, but will set you in the way of putting things right. It will give you new and higher interests in life, a deeper insight into spiritual things, a more earnest desire for the glory of God, and for the benefit of our fellow men.

We wish particularly to avoid any excitement or sensation. We want the work to be very simple, very real, and above all, very practical; everything connected with it marked by true earnestness and deep reverence. It must depend wholly for its success upon the power of the Holy Spirit, and for that blessed gift we must depend much on prayer.

I ask you then to remember the coming mission, and

to use the short form printed below frequently in your prayers.

Your faithful servant in Christ,

* * * * *

A Short Prayer for the Mission.

Almighty God, who in Thy tender love toward mankind, didst send Thine Only Begotten Son to seek and save that which was lost, bless the mission to this parish to the conversion of sinners and to the strengthening of the faithful, for the Glory of Thy Great Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

(b) A Mission (in a poor parish).

We have recently had a week's special mission services in each of our three mission rooms and then in the church—a month's special effort altogether. The seed of the Gospel has been largely scattered. Many thousand tracts and hand-bills have been distributed. God will be true to His promise; our labour cannot be in vain.—(*Vicar's Annual Report.*)

(c) Interval necessary.

It is generally held that the holding of a mission in a parish oftener than once in ten years is not desirable. This may be true of country or small town parishes, but taking into account the enormous population of this parish, and especially its migratory character, I am disposed to think that a mission might be held with advantage in every five or six years.

(10) It is a common plan for the vicar to publish an annual letter to his people, sometimes in a special number of the Parish Magazine, but more often in connection with the year's report, and extracts from some of these have already been given. The following completer specimen is written from the Evangelical standpoint, and is addressed to parishioners of mixed class—lower middle, working, and poor :—

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS AND FRIENDS,—Before this magazine reaches you we shall have crossed another of time's dividing lines, and a New Year of grace will have begun. May it be to you a Happy New Year. In your worldly concerns may prosperity attend you! In spiritual things may blessing abound! The Lord be with you! His presence is the secret and source of happiness and prosperity. "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man": or, as an old version quaintly reads, "he was a luckie fellow." As you enter on the New Year seek His presence and favour, and the year will be a happy one. The Lord be with you, and bless you!

Standing, as it were, between two epochs of time, we naturally look back on the past and forward to the future. In the backward look there is always much to humble us. The past is never what we would have it be. And the review of the year just ended, while it calls for songs of praise for daily grace and daily mercies, leads us also humbly to sue for pardon of its sins, negligences, and ignorances.

The record of the year is a record of steady, persistent work. It has been marked by nothing new and startling. Experience teaches us over and over again that novel methods attract only so long as the novelty lasts. The sober worship of the Church of England, as we know it—the clear exposition of God's Holy Word—diligent pastoral visitation—personal intercourse with those who need special help—these are the agencies which in the past produced men and women of sterling faith and full of good works. These are still the best agencies for producing and fostering a sound and true religion.

But while we do not record anything startling, we can with thankfulness record a year of work owned and blessed of God. Something of what has been accomplished we have been permitted to see: much awaits the revelation of the great day.

Spiritual results cannot be measured by arithmetic. You may have an imposing array of figures with spiritual life and work at a very low ebb. You may have meagre statistics, and with them a blessed, spiritual work. In giving you any figures, I ask you to estimate them at their proper value.

The congregations have been well maintained, and this in an age of increasing worldliness and indifference. In estimating our congregations, we shall be unfair to ourselves if we do not take into account the special local difficulties. But there is room for improvement; and I rely upon you to help in this. A loving invitation and a brotherly welcome will often do much.

There has been a gratifying increase in the weekly offertory. I regard this as indicating that the members of our congregation look upon the offertory not as a mere collection of money, but as an offering of their substance made directly to God, the Giver of all.

There have been two thousand eight hundred and eleven attendances at Holy Communion. It should be remembered that these have been without undue pressure. We value beyond all price this precious sacrament which our Lord has bequeathed to us, but we have something more to teach. It would be easy to multiply communicants, and the apparent gain would be real loss. Dead souls cannot feed upon Christ, and where there is a living soul it will desire and seek after that which is its refreshment and strength. I know, and I marvel at it, that there are professed Christians who neglect this precious means of grace, and habitually turn their backs upon the table of the Lord. If any such reads this letter, let him ask himself, "Is this negligence because I am wickedly unmindful of my Lord's command, or because I have a name to live and am *dead*?"

The number of baptisms for the year is one hundred and ninety-two. This, I think, is satisfactory, and shows that parents, even when negligent of their own spiritual interests, desire God's blessing for their children. Parents and God-parents, it is your part and duty to see that these children be educated in the faith and fear of God, and in the teaching of the Church into which they have been baptized.

Six adults have—on their solemn profession of repentance and faith—received baptism. We may confidently hope that while, by this sacrament, they were grafted into Christ's Church, it was also the pledge and seal to them of everlasting life.

It is also gratifying to record that the number of candidates for confirmation was the largest of any one year since the formation of the parish. The young communicants of the Church are a very hopeful feature.

The day and Sunday schools are flourishing.

The day schools maintain their high standard of efficiency. With the new 'Grant in aid' to help us, we hope now to have less difficulty in meeting the expenses of the schools.

The Sunday schools have increased in numbers, and are supplied with devoted teachers. There have been several additions to the staff of teachers during the year, and we still ask for more, especially for the boys' school and the mission school.

The children's services are well attended. Both these and the Sunday schools will in time prove a nursery for the Church.

The attendance at the various weekly meetings has been very fluctuating. Indeed, it has become a question with us whether we have not too many meetings. Fewer of them with better attendances and more warmth and vigour would be more satisfactory. It should be remembered that these meetings involve an expenditure of precious time on the part of the clergy—time which is willingly given when we feel it to be profitably spent, but which must be grudged when the attendance shows want of interest and appreciation.

There is room for great improvement in the Wednesday evening service. One hour between Sunday and Sunday ought not to be too much for worship. What a profitable and delightful hour it ought to be! Yet how few avail themselves of it. Let the New Year see better things.

The Thursday evening preparation class and the Saturday evening prayer meeting also are unsatisfactory. Both speak of want of interest and earnestness. We need a new baptism of the Holy Ghost. We need new zeal and fervour. We need again to do the first works.

We enter upon the New Year deeply conscious of the great work given us to do. We have the Lord's people to shepherd. We have, if possible, to carry the message of salvation through Jesus Christ to every home in the parish. We have to give to individuals the message of the love of God. We have to train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And we are surrounded by terrible indifference and opposition to the things of God. But we undertake our work in hope and confidence. We go forth in the strength of the Lord God, fully assured that He who is with us is greater than all who can be against us, and that the weapons of our warfare are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan. In this work for God I ask your earnest, hearty co-operation. With the dawn of the New Year consecrate yourselves anew to Him Whose you are and Whom you serve. Seek to have a more vivid sense of the shortness of time, the nearness of eternity, and the importance of eternal things. We enter upon a year which may be our last. Let us live and work as if it were our last. Count every day lost in which you have not done something for the glory of God and the good of your fellow-men. Be diligent in business, but be not all-engrossed by it. In prayer—in God's Word—in the means of grace seek an equipoise for your souls. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

This letter ends with an eloquent metrical appeal against Romanism in the Church of England, culminating in the line: "Cleanse and defend, O Lord, Thy Church."

(11) The method of parochial management is recognised by some as being a no less important matter than the method of work. Most parishes are, in effect, autocracies, with a consultative committee of assistant-clergy and, perhaps, the chief workers; decisions, however, resting ultimately with the incumbent. In a few cases a constitution is granted, with a carefully-defined franchise, involving, it is true, but a slight devolution of real power, but forming, nevertheless, a distinct step towards more democratic lay management.

On the Church Council, to which the following extract refers, the clergy, churchwardens, sidesmen, and the outgoing churchwardens and sidesmen for one year are all *ex officio* members. In addition, there are "twelve elected male members (eight seatholders, or subscribers of an equivalent sum to the fund, and four non-seatholders)." The council is elected annually by members of the congregation, male and female. Members of the Council must be of full age, baptized members of the Church of England, and *bonâ fide* members of the congregation (that is, attendants, as a rule, at least once on Sunday).

Duties of the Church Council.

It shall be the business of the Council to *decide* all questions of finance provided the legal position of the vicar and churchwardens be not interfered with; to be *consulted* on all changes of "use," and generally in conference with the vicar and churchwardens to *advise* and assist in all questions of parish interest, and all that makes for the kingdom of God.—(*From a leaflet; parish mainly working class.*)

(12) *Concerning Buildings.*

(a) The great event of the year was the opening-up and consecration of the Memorial Side Chapel by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese. . . . Those who worship in it at weekday celebrations and services know what

a boon it is to have a place wherein two or three can gather together, instead of being scattered through our large church.—(*From the Annual Letter of a Vicar of a rich parish.*)

(b) We have now a church beautified and made decent for Divine worship, and a mission hall erected where the poor can worship in their working clothes, thus affording them equal opportunities with ourselves for hearing the Gospel and learning the way to heaven. How anyone who has the slightest feeling for the unspiritual condition of the working classes, and who cares to think, with the barest sympathy, over the necessity that exists for a congregation to provide them with a suitable place of worship, can breathe a word against building the mission hall, passes my comprehension. Could the numerous difficulties in completing the building have been foreseen, so great is the necessity for giving the poor the *opportunity* of worshipping God and hearing what will do their souls good, that I would cheerfully have faced them. Those who have taken their fair share in this work have reason to be thankful that their consciences are now clear of the condemnation which now rests upon the poor who are daily dying around us, ignorant of Jesus and His love. There never was a good work consummated without having its opponents and grumblers, but these are not usually found amongst those who assist in the contributions. What I entreat for now is your earnest prayers that the Lord's blessing will rest upon the efforts being put forth here for the spread of the saving knowledge of His dear name.—(*Vicar's Annual Report.*)

(c) The question arose, What are we to do about rebuilding the class-rooms, &c.? Mr. * * * * * thought he saw one way out of the difficulty: "Abolish the soup kitchen." At first I was taken aback; so much sentiment has always clung about the soup kitchen. But when it was pointed out that we only used that room for thirteen weeks in the year at the very most, and that for the other thirty-nine it lay on our hands, not only idle, but from disuse getting more or less into disrepair and invariably landing us in considerable expense; when, too, the unsatis-

factoriness of the result of all this expenditure of time and labour and money was dwelt on—frequently gallons having to be thrown away—when, in short, it dawned on me that the soup kitchen was after all a snare and a delusion, I rejoiced. . . . —(*From the Vicar's Address in the Report of a parish mainly middle and working class.*)

(13) *Sermons on Social Subjects*, by various preachers, arranged by the Christian Social Union for delivery on week-days in Lent in a City church:—

The Condition of the Poorest, the Real Test of National Well-being; Wealth and Waste; A Gospel for the Submerged; Ways of Spending Money; What is Society to Me; The Place of Religion in Business; Christian Almsgiving; Citizenship—A Religious Duty; The Ground of our Hope; The Use of City Churches; The Sacrifice of Thought; The Social Backwater; Our Firm Foundation; The Sunday Question; Our Children—England's Future Citizens; The Social Function of a London Parish; The Ethics of Municipal Trading; Hooliganism—Its Cause and Cure; The Ideal and the Practical; The Social Question in the Villages; St. Francis of Assisi; Hopes and Fears.

(14) *Intercession.*

(a) *Band of Church Watchers and Intercessors.*—This band, which has existed for over a quarter of a century in the parish, now consists of fifty members. There are five watches of one hour each kept in the church on Fridays, and the subjects for the intercessions of the whole band are arranged by the chaplain every month.—(*From the "List of Parochial Institutions" in the Annual Report of a mixed parish, including some rich.*)

(b) *Special Intercession for those engaged in the war.*

. . . . Day by day we are remembering before the altar the sick and the wounded, the prisoners and the dying, and are commending to God's mercy those who have fallen. And these prayers should be for all engaged, friend and foe alike. . . . It ought not to be difficult to arrange that a perpetual stream of intercession should be kept up through the day in the church, if a number

of persons will make themselves responsible for (say) a quarter of an hour to be spent in church with this object.—(*Working and lower middle class parish—High Church.*)

(c) We ask our readers to try and remember the following intercessions daily in their prayers, and specially, when possible, at the celebration of the Blessed Sacrament:—

		PRAY FOR	PRAY FOR GOD'S BLESSING ON ALL LIVING IN
November	1	The Peace of the Church.	[Here follow specified streets and blocks of buildings in the parish for each day of the month.]
"	2	The Faithful Departed	
"	3	Church Work in the Parish.	
"	4	The Parish Clergy.	
"	5	The Church Workers.	
"	6	The Altar Servers.	
"	7	The Choir.	
"	8	Home Missions.	
"	9	The Sunday School.	
"	10	The Band of Hope	
"	11	The East London Church Fund.	
"	12	Faithful Communicants.	
"	13	The Boys' Bible-class	
"	14	The Women's Bible-class.	
"	15	The Girls' Bible-class.	
"	16	The Mothers' Meeting.	
"	17	The Sunday Bible-classes.	
"	18	The Conversion of Sinners.	
"	19	Those Killed in War.	
"	20	Our Troops in South Africa.	
"	21	Christians in North China	
"	22	An Increase of Communicants.	
"	23	Lapsed Communicants	
"	24	Our Enemies and Opponents.	
"	25	Neglected Children.	
"	26	The Unbaptized.	
"	27	The Unconfirmed.	
"	28	The Sick and Dying.	
"	29	Foreign Missions.	
"	30	All Bishops and Clergy.	

All Mondays are observed as special days of intercession for the parish ; prayers are offered for this intention at a special service at 8 p.m., at which the particular petitions for personal and private needs will be gladly received and included by the clergy.—(*From the Magazine of a poor and rough parish.*)

(d) The following intercessions are used in the daily services held in the morning chapel:—

Monday.—For all who have gone forth this day to their work, especially those engaged in the various industries of the parish.

Tuesday.—For all parents in the parish, especially the fathers and mothers of the children attending our schools.

Wednesday.—For all children in the parish, especially those who belong to our Sunday schools; and young persons, especially those recently confirmed.

Thursday.—For the members of our Communicants' Union, and for all the church workers in the parish: visitors, day and Sunday school teachers, temperance workers, church attendants, and others.

Friday.—For all in the parish who are erring and straying from the ways of God like lost sheep, especially the drunken and intemperate.

Saturday.—For the bishops of the diocese and the clergy, especially the clergy of the parish.—(*From the Report of a working-class and poor parish.*)

(15) Further light is thrown upon parish organization and upon the methods of work by the following extracts, which refer mostly to definite parish doings:—

(a) *Embroideries and Vestments.*

Miss * * * * * has replaced the super-frontal, stolen last year, by a wonderful piece of work on cloth of gold, and her sister has consecrated her talents by employing them on the production of a superb white chalice veil and burse It is no ordinary privilege to communicants to be permitted to dedicate their skill with the needle to ornaments so intimately connected with the Blessed Sacrament, and to know that it has to be of the very best, because hardly any eye but that of God Himself will ever see such accessories as the coverings of a chalice.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in the Annual Report of a well-to-do suburban parish.*)

(b) It may be of interest if we give a little explanation of why different coloured altar frontals and vestments are used on different days in church. *White* is used for the festivals of our Blessed Lord, of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

and of Saints who did not suffer martyrdom—also at baptisms, confirmations, and holy matrimony. *Red* for festivals of the Holy Ghost, and of Saints who were martyrs. *Dark blue* or *purple* during Advent and Lent, and other penitential seasons. *Black* for services for the dead, and on Good Friday. *Green* for ordinary occasions, after Epiphany and Trinity. There is, of course, a meaning for everything that is done or used in church: men^a and women who have been gifted by God with intelligence cannot offer to Him a meaningless and unintelligent service, or something that is simply *nice* or *pretty*; and as we come to understand the meaning of things—which certainly should always be explained if we will take the trouble to read or hear the explanation—so we shall come to take a more appreciative interest in the worship which it is our great privilege to be allowed to offer to Almighty God.—(*From the Magazine of a poor and rough parish.*)

(c) *Palm Sunday.*

For Palm Sunday the same kind friend who sent us the little palm crosses last year repeated his kind gift; this time he sent over two hundred, and we thought we should certainly have enough and to spare; but as it happened, the demand was considerably greater than the supply, and at the distribution at the eleven o'clock celebration there were several who came up to the chancel steps and had to go away disappointed. Another year, all being well, we must ask for more. It was very gratifying to see so many grown-up men and women coming to receive the palms along with the children, and to note the devout and reverent behaviour of all alike.—(*From the Magazine of a poor and rough parish.*)

(d) Christmas entertainments were so many and so various that it would be impossible within our limits to give anything like an adequate account of them; a mere record of the date of their occurrence must suffice in some cases, and it must be left to the imagination of the reader to fill this out by picturing the happiness and enjoyment felt in all cases by those who took part, in them [then follows a list of seventeen different parties held between December 22nd and January 25th].—(*From*

the Magazine of a parish commanding wealth, but itself for the most part poor and degraded.)

(c) On January 4th and 6th Mr. * * * * * hopes to hold his entertainments on behalf of the Thanksgiving Fund. The troupe of minstrels that he has got together, named the * * * * * Blackbirds, ought to be a great attraction. All I can say is, come and hear these birds, they will form an aviary of wit and amusement. Seats, reserved, 2s; [other prices follow]. Book early and turn up in your thousands.—(*From the Magazine of a parish mainly working class.*)

(f) During last autumn a *café chantant* was held at the * * * * * Hall, which was attended with very great success, and realized a profit of £180.—(*From a lower middle and working-class parish Report.*)

(g) *Fumble Sales.*

We now take it for granted, perhaps too much so, that these sales will realize some £200 per annum for church purposes.

(h) *Annual Excursions.*

The *regular* attendants at our four mothers' meetings, our four Sunday schools, and our various evening classes, will be entitled to go free and have a good tea at * * * * * Temperance Hotel, Hampton Court, but must provide their own lunch.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in the Magazine of a poor parish.*)

(i) *Annual School Treat.*

We hope to take two thousand of our children to Herne Bay; seven hundred of the younger children will be taken most likely to Ashted Woods, and the very small ones, about five hundred, will have a treat at home. Subscriptions towards the treats will be gratefully received. The treats will cost £300.—(*From the Magazine of a large working-class and poor parish.*)

(j) S. * * * * * Window Garden Society.

This Society has been established for the promotion of window gardening amongst the working classes in the parishes of * * * * * [four are mentioned].

The ninth annual flower show was held in the grounds adjoining the parish church on July 1st, and was most successful. About four hundred plants were exhibited, and the judges reported that they showed evidence of careful training, and were very creditable to the growers.

Prizes were given for fuchsias, geraniums, and "other plants," and a special prize for the "best flowers exhibited by a child."—(*From the Annual Report of a large working-class and poor parish.*)

(k) *Charities.*

. In one way or another our chief item has been under the head of poor. No distinction is made between creeds, good or bad; all as they require help have it, so far as we can afford it. Alas, that it has to be such a drop in the vast ocean of need!—(*Vicar's Letter in Annual Report of a poor parish.*)

(l) I always like to give poor people I know I can trust, money rather than tickets. It does not injure their sense of self-respect when they go into the little shops of the trades-folk who are their neighbours.

Our relief is given with the utmost care and circumspection. By far the greater part goes to the sick poor; but there are other cases that arise from time to time when, in the course of his pastoral visitation, a parish priest must be able to show practical sympathy, or else stay away.—(*Vicar's Letter in Annual Report of another poor parish.*)

(m) All who have helped the sick and poor of our parish in the very great distress of the last three months will like to know that 220 cwt. of coals, 476 pints of milk, and 450 eggs have been given away—not counting meat, grocery, and bread tickets, and 1200 children's dinners.—(*From the Magazine of a poor and rough parish.*)

(n) *Accounts of a soup kitchen.*—Subscriptions and donations, £29. 10s 6d; pence received, £8. 18s 4d. Cost of preparing soup, £24. 13s 8d.—(*Abstracted from the accounts of a parish mainly middle and lower middle class.*)

§ 2

CONFLICTING CLAIMS

(1) It is little to be wondered at that, in view of the great variety of parochial undertakings open to the clergy, difficulty is often felt in deciding what things it is most desirable to do or attempt. There is a conflict of interests, and the sense of the grave practical problem which thus arises often finds expression. In the following letter, written with "his own people" in view, the choice is made, at any rate theoretically, and the spirituality of the task of the Church made paramount:—

. It often seems as if the parish priest was regarded as one whose task it is to arrange cricket and football clubs, to amuse the children after school hours, to give out hospital letters, grocery tickets or money, if he can be induced to do so, and to organize treats; while he is felt to be taking a liberty if he remonstrates with individuals about their sins, or urges them to the worship of Almighty God. Of course it will be said that all these things are aids to bring people to religion. Do they? that is the question. I almost fear that they have come to be looked on as necessary sweet-meats with which to gild the religious pill Worship is the central object, not the by-play of the Church's life. Of course it means a long task and uphill work, but it will be found to be the only course which will really succeed. We have tried to do what we could to alleviate some little of the sickness and suffering which exist so terribly about us, and that without a question of creed. We have no religious tests in such matters. But we have tried to make it plain that our first purpose is a spiritual purpose, by the object lesson of frequent services, by the offering of the Daily Eucharist, and by our teaching. And if our communicants are lamentably few, and our congregations scanty, at least they know what the real purpose of the Church's work is, and I think it is becoming

recognised outside amongst those who as yet never enter the church, and on that our hope for the future, dim as it sometimes seems, is built.

The next great need is definiteness. There is a widespread tendency in matters of religious belief to be vague, to drop away into generalities, to "consecrate Christian morality while dropping Christian dogma," to minimise those essential features of the Church's faith which separate her from other Christian societies. . . . One continually hears that "it is all good", "we are all aiming for the same place," "it does not matter whether you go to church or chapel." . . . It is easy to see the consequences. Vagueness of belief prepares the way, in at least the majority of people, for vagueness of conduct. A pious sentimentality takes the place of a deep sense of discipline, and one thing after another is dropped and readily excused. . . . You cannot build up Christian life on any other foundation than that of Christian dogma. . . . In mission work, where temptations are so many, so pressing in their incidence, a clear, definite, sharply outlined creed is a first necessity. By no other means than the clearest teaching about the Divine character of the Church, her sacramental grace, her authoritative voice in matters of faith and morals, will you really hold your people or finally lift them above the dangers with which their lives are so tragically beset.

I do not mean, of course, that the Church is to be put, so to speak, before her Lord, but that it is the will of her Lord to teach, forgive, strengthen, guide, tend, control, and save through His Church., Perhaps this makes the work slow. People are not very patient of sermons which take the form often of careful instruction, and they see, too, that such teaching necessitates many a clear decision in everyday life for which they are not always prepared. But it is the one way by which permanent and lasting work is to be done. Slowly, often one by one, you will gather about you a body of those who know what they have believed. . . . I daresay we should have by this time gathered larger congregations, especially on a Sunday evening, if we had gone in for more popular and attractive methods, but

I should not value the addition of hundreds if they had been obtained by the sacrifice of definiteness in our teaching.

With this is closely connected the upholding of a high ideal. It is a great mistake to suppose that because you work in rough and degraded neighbourhoods, you are therefore to accommodate your ideal to the standard of life which prevails about you. It is often done, as by saying: Not much is to be expected from those whose advantages are so few, whose dangers so many. You must blind your eyes to a good deal that goes on, and be content if you get an average decency of life.—No greater mistake could be made.

And if real godliness and not respectability is necessary as an aim and an incentive for the development of the individual character, it is also necessary for the spread of religion in any parish. It is not so much more Christians we need, as better Christians. . . . We have never tried to make things easy. We have never worked for a large number of communicants at the expense of their earnestness. We have tried to keep the standard high.—(*From Vicar's Letter in Annual Report of a large parish, working class with some poor.*)

(2) Sidelights on the same question are thrown by the five following extracts :—

(a) There was practically no winter, and therefore the distress, though always great, was certainly less acute than usual. . . . Hundreds of my parishioners neglected God as usual, but they could not "blame it on to" the weather. In fact there were no disturbing circumstances to obscure the one everlasting conflict between Divine grace and human sin. And we clergy, less engrossed than usual with soup kitchen and blankets, were left comparatively free to engage in that conflict in the performance of our primary duty as parish priests.—(*Report of parish, working class and poor.*)

(b) It may serve to show what the claims of parochial work amount to if I say that during the last twelve months I (apart from all that my colleagues have done) have paid nearly one thousand visits—to say nothing of

innumerable parochial interviews; have served on eighteen committees with their weekly, monthly, or quarterly meetings, and have (with assistance) written some four thousand letters. I do not say this because I think mine is an exceptional case—far from it—but only as showing that a West End clergyman's position is not the luxurious one it is sometimes supposed to be, and that our work does not consist entirely or chiefly, as is sometimes supposed, in conducting an unnecessary number of week-day services in churches more than half empty.—(*Vicar's Letter in Report of rich parish.*)

(c) We are sadly understaffed. What with the routine work of writing and accounts, the supervision and working of our various organizations and other sorts of more secular work, the clergy find it hard to get anything like enough time for what is their special duty: prayer, study, spiritual work, teaching, and systematic visiting. The result is what might have been expected. The work suffers in character, tone and quality, and amid much seeming activity there is not the real, deep, lasting progress that one could wish.—(*A Missioner's Report.*)

(d) At the time I am writing this letter my colleague is away in the South of France, ordered there by his medical adviser on account of a general breakdown from overwork; so I am left for the time alone at the busiest period of the year, and am suffering myself, too, from the same cause. Each of my colleagues in succession has broken down in the same way and been obliged to depart. This has made it quite clear to my mind that we ought to strive at all cost to obtain the assistance of a third priest. There is far more work than any two men can do. And what time have we for study? Yet we are expected in the pulpit to be fresh and vigorous, and to deal with the problems that now perplex men's minds.—(*Vicar's Letter in Report of lower middle and working-class parish.*)

(e) It will be fresh in the memory of you all that to everyone's deep regret, the first vicar, the Rev. * * * * *, so completely broke down in the autumn of * * * * * that upon his return from his summer holiday he found

himself unable to resume work.—(*Vicar's Letter in Report of rather poor parish.*)

Such health breakdowns are only too frequent.

(3) The difficulty of adjusting ideals to conflicting claims may perhaps be further illustrated by the three following extracts, all drawn from the same parish magazine :—

(a) One aspect of the season of Lent is specially valuable at the present time. It is a protest against the luxury and love of things pleasant. If you want to get men to attend a place of worship you must ask them to a "*Pleasant Sunday afternoon.*" Tell them of their *duty*, remind them that worship means *sacrifice*, and they will not come; so they must be tempted and bribed into coming by startling novelties making up a sort of Sunday concert with a dash of religion thrown in. Against such things, Lent is a protest. It reminds us, in a word, that Christ said, "If any man will come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

(b) But relaxations are not forbidden, for in the same magazine we read :

Shrove Tuesday. It has been the custom to have a social gathering on Shrove Tuesday each year, after which we have a rest from such festivities until Easter Monday. This year it has been proposed that there shall be a "*Fancy Dress Social*" in aid of the Church repair fund. Prizes will be given for the best costumes. Tickets 6d each.

(c) And again :

We had the great pleasure and privilege of seeing the beautiful Bethlehem Tableaux in our parish room. It would not be too much to say that anything more exquisite had never been seen in that room. It would be impossible to describe the tableaux, which were all arranged not only with reverent care, but also with artistic skill. It is nice to know that all who took part were communicants, and the whole undertaking is entered upon and carried out in a truly religious spirit.

§ 3

APPEALS FOR HELP IN MONEY OR IN KIND

References are frequent to the absorption of time in raising funds. In the following nine extracts various forms of appeal are given, drawn, for the most part, from parishes that may be classed as poor :—

(a) The cry must always be more ! more ! and still more ! whether in respect of personal service or of money.—(*From the Report of a mixed parish, including some rich.*)

(b) In the interest of the parish work I must say at once that it makes so great and constant a drain upon the funds that, again and again, during these two years, they have quite run out, and I have advanced money from a slender private purse. The pity of this is, that I have to give time to seeking help which can ill be spared from other duties, and, what I feel to be a still greater trouble, I carry sometimes a weight of care which hardly leaves me

“ A heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathize.”

—(*From a Vicar's Annual Letter.*)

(c) Last year was a time of much trial, not only in being left without a curate, but also owing to the unusual number of deaths and removals from our congregation. Every year the work becomes in this respect more and more trying. Not the least of these trials is the consequent loss of ministerial income. And this has been accentuated in my case by the serious effect of the plan of a weekly offertory. I prophesied that this effect would follow, when I consented to the experiment being tried for the sake of the churchwardens ; but that effect has been far more serious than I myself foresaw. For one thing, people will regard it as a substitute for pew rents, and they seem practically quite oblivious of the fact that pew rents constitute the minister's income, and that not one penny of the offertory is received by him. I am afraid

it is of little use to state this fact, but it must be stated, however unheeded.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in Report of a declining suburban parish, with some poor.*)

(d) It is important to remind parishioners of the words of the Almighty (Malachi iii. 8 to 11.) “Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say—Wherein have we robbed THEE? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(e) *Our Special Needs: Donations for*

1. The various **Deficiencies** in our year's accounts.
2. **Magazine Fund.**—We have an ugly balance on the *wrong* side in this account, and shall be grateful for subscriptions towards the printing and posting of our monthly reports.
3. **Men's Club House.**—At present we have raised, including the proceeds of our “Summer Forest,” about £920 out of the required £1300. We have, therefore, still to raise the inside of £400. As we are most anxious to commence building in August, or, at any rate, before the winter frosts set in, we shall be truly thankful if those of our readers who have not yet helped towards erecting a memorial to the converted coal cellar, will send us *something*.

Besides Donations we shall be very glad to receive

Clothes of every kind, new or old.

Hospital Letters for the London, Victoria Park, City Road or Shadwell Hospitals.

Convalescent Home Letters.

Books for our various libraries.—(*From a parish Report.*)

(f) *For a Heating Apparatus.*—In winter time the church is woefully cold and damp. The moisture strikes up between the stones of the floor and spreads wide in dark discoloured patches. It is hard enough to get the folk

to church at all, and it is a sad drawback that, notwithstanding big fires in the stoves, there is often a damp, repelling chilliness in the atmosphere of the church.—(*A Vicar's Letter in Annual Report.*)

(g) We want new pens, new ink, and, perhaps more than all, new energy, to tell of struggles, hopes, defeats, and perhaps one victory here and there. We only wonder sometimes how we have ever been able to go on at all. Money—we don't like to say it, but it is true, is our one great want the one question, day by day and week by week, is how to get money.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(h) I would draw the attention of my readers to the fact that many of these [mission room] agencies are suffering, sadly from lack of £ s d. Now I contend that this ought not to be: here we have a huge staff of willing workers ready and eager to carry on the good work among the poor. Is it too much to ask

I much regret to have to place on record the fact that I have not received so much as the smallest coin of the realm in response to my earnest appeal in the editorial of last month. Let me, however, make a final attempt. May I be able to chronicle the fact that ere the knell of the present year is rung, this unhappy deficit has been met, and that the New Year, towards which we are so fast hastening, may see the removal of this slur of apathy in our mission work which has for so long hung round the necks of us all as a millstone.

THE EDITOR.

—(*From the November and December numbers of a Parish Magazine the editor of which is not the vicar.*) “

(i) Be sure not to go for your holiday without a collecting card for our new hall. It is a splendid opportunity for getting pennies and sixpences from people who have not given anything before to our mission buildings.—(*From a note in a Parish Magazine.*)

§ 4

APPEALS FOR RESPONSE

FOR MORE DEVOUT OR PRAYERFUL LIVES

(a) MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,—The Church has set apart this solemn [Lenten] season of the year for greater self-denial on our part, for self-examination, for more diligence and regularity in attendance at God's house, for more frequent Communions, for a nearer and "a closer walk with God." Let me beg of you to make this effort; it will bring you blessing and peace.

If you have been neglectful and careless about the things which belong to your eternity, have done with this indifference! If you have been irregular and lukewarm about coming to Holy Communion—and I fear some of you have—cease this lukewarmness! Let not the things which belong to this world, with all its carnal pleasures, entice you away from loving service to Almighty God.

And, alas! how many hundreds of you in this parish have never entered your own parish church, and who are living without God, without Christ, as though God did not exist, and Christ had done nothing to redeem your soul. Why live and die in sin, and pass into eternity with an unpardoned soul?

• Come to church! Come now! Come at this Lenten season! • Come ever! Come to God! Come to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon and peace!

"Though your sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Faithfully yours,

* * * * *, Vicar.

—(From the Magazine of a rather poor parish.)

(b) The solemn season of Lent began this year on February 23rd, Ash-Wednesday, when three services were held at St. John's Church, all fairly well attended. No extra services will be held during Lent this year, as we would rather see our parishioners making, at least, the attempt to attend some of the not infrequent existing services. As far as numbers are concerned, there is room

for improvement at daily mattins, on Wednesday evenings, and more particularly on Sunday mornings. With regard to the last mentioned, we would remind some of our people that as Lent is a time to exercise self-denial, surely we might try during the few weeks of Lent to deny ourselves some small indulgence, usually taken on the Lord's Day by way of extra rest, to be present at church on Sunday mornings. Some little inconvenience might possibly be caused; but what is a little inconvenience on our part compared with the sufferings of Him of whom it is recorded: "He said unto them *all*, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow Me." (St. Luke ix. 23.)—*(From the Magazine of a poor and degraded parish.)*

(c) I preached twice in the evening a very special sermon on the growing decline of church attendance and Sabbath observance. It was a subject that I was particularly anxious that all the congregation should hear, but (as often happens when that is the case) there were very thin congregations both morning and evening. Although this was very unfortunate and disappointing, I could excuse many for non-attendance, at least those who live at a distance, for the rain was exceptionally heavy. Generally there is little excuse irregularity of attendance is a serious wrong, not only to ourselves, but to the Lord's cause and honour. The Sabbath is not now kept as it was no longer satisfied with six days a week of devotion to pleasure, [its votaries] encroach on the holy day of God in their pursuit, and so public worship is by thousands wholly neglected, while the streets and roads are full of pleasure-seekers.—*(From the Magazine of a declining parish, mainly middle class.)*

(d) The Church is charged to maintain a high tone of Christian excellency among her people, and all services, missions, and institutions in the parish exist for that purpose. The most effective of all weapons which can be used is in the hands of everyone, but in London is apt to be forgotten: I mean the force of example. Living in the midst of a multitude, Londoners are 'tempted to believe that their 'lives are unobserved, and that it

matters little to other people what they do; but it cannot be denied that the tone of Society is the reflection of the habits of the individuals who compose it. In such a simple instance as the observance of the Lord's Day, the people who disregard it weaken its influence by their example; the people who observe it cause it to be respected. There is no escape from the force of an example; each one has to answer for his own course of life, and to bear the blame if it has lowered the character of other Christians. This simple weapon of example, I pray you to use effectively.—(*From the Rector's Annual Letter in a mixed parish, including both rich and very poor.*)

(c) We intend to have the church open (daily) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A building which has cost some thousands of pounds and is the parish church, ought to be available for private prayer and meditation. In a parish where thousands of persons would find it impossible, even if they so desired, to have that privacy and quiet which is desirable, it is only right that the church should be open during the daytime. We trust that many will avail themselves of the open church and may enter, if only for a few minutes, for prayer to God.—(*From the Magazine of a working class and poor parish.*)

(f) It puzzles and distresses me why so few of you ever find your way to church on a weekday "to hear God's Word and pray with the curate when he publicly says daily the morning and evening prayer;" the one is always said at 7.45, and the other at 5.30, and "a bell is tolled thereunto."—(*From the Vicar's Letter in a parish occupied by the lower middle, working, and poorer classes.*)

(g) I earnestly wish that more members of the congregation could be induced to join in one or other of the various organizations at work in our parish. It would be helpful to others as well as to themselves if they would take part in what is going on in connection with Church work, instead of being content to come to church on Sundays, and perhaps, weekdays, and isolating themselves from all Church life. Our communicants' guild especially ought to have more members. . . . The rules are as few and simple as it is possible to make them.—(*From a Vicar's Annual Letter in a rich parish.*)

(h) A prayer for the mission has been printed on a slip of paper, and a thousand of them are being distributed in the parish. If a large volume of earnest petition should ascend to heaven for five or six weeks before this effort, to bring home the Gospel of God to our brother men around us, begins—that would be a good preparation—a solid foundation. Dear reader, use the prayer daily. It is quite short :—

Almighty God, who art a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in Thee, turn to Thyself the hearts of all the people in this parish; prosper our Mission; and make us all to know and feel that there is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby ye must be saved, but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

(From the Magazine of a declining parish still mainly middle and lower middle class.)

(i) You little know how we, “your servants for Jesus’ sake,” desire your prayers, or how much we depend upon you for them. We can help each other much by mutual prayer, and if we strive to help one another in this way, we may humbly expect the presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit in our midst.—*(From Vicar’s Letter in the Magazine of a parish mainly middle and lower middle class.)*

(j) Oh, that on clergy, choir, church officials and workers the Holy Ghost might fall. “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” Power to do what? Nay, rather what can not be done? Then our services would be seasons of blessing indeed; the children of the King would rejoice and be glad; and sinners would be converted and turn to the Lord; doors which are closed would be opened to us; homes in which He is not found would receive Him as an honoured guest. A parish in which the Church is alive, made and kept alive by the Holy Ghost; is that our aim?—*(From the Magazine of a working class and poor parish.)*

(k) May God draw us nearer together, making us feel the greatness of our cause, over-shadowing all disagreements of temperament and opinion, and all vanity and pride in our achievements. . . .—*(From the Vicar’s Letter in the Report of a parish mainly working class.)*

§ 5

COLLEGE MISSIONS

(a) The story of a college mission is given in the following extract from a report, showing not only a confident spirit, but also the recognition of grave difficulties, together with the enunciation of principles based upon a hard experience :—

It was resolved to start a college mission.
The decision was largely due to a speech
which graphically pictured the sad condition of London south of the Thames, and strongly advocated the combination of religious and social methods. “We recognise, welcome, and proclaim a salvation for both worlds, for body as well as spirit, for time as well as for eternity.” This has been our message to the people. [*Reprinted from the report of 1895, and forming the introduction to that of 1898, from which some extracts follow*]:—

The mission brings rich and poor together in the best, because the most natural way. There is nothing forced or artificial. There is no pauperising or spoiling. The welcome from the people is spontaneous and heartfelt and real. Loyalty, goodwill, chivalrous feeling, are slowly flowing back into the lives of our people. Class feeling melts away. At times one seems almost to be living on the edge of a volcano, so seething is the mass of discontent, so utter is the divorce between rich and poor. The interest of our people is deepening and growing more and more intelligent. The hour of our daily evening service has changed from 5.30 (a most inconvenient time) to 8 p.m. The change has proved most salutary nothing could give more help to our worn and tired men and women at the end of a weary day than this closing act of worship and intercession. It performs an important missionary work also The fixed hour is of great importance Little by little there is growing up among us a definitely church-going people, and this means order, reverence, obedience, quietness, besides other still deeper gifts which go to transform noisy, wild, intemperate lives. With a growing body of communicants and daily worshippers,

the strain of having no permanent separate building for a church is a severe one. We have sole spiritual charge of five thousand people The difficulties as to the new permanent church seem to be very great and complicated, but surely a way will be found when people are so earnest. What would be thought in the country of a parish of five thousand people without a real church? It is hard to wait; meanwhile we must do the best we can. If the secular work has to be curtailed, it is a salutary lesson that the First Commandment is the first and great Commandment, and must never be allowed to take the second place for a moment, either in thought or deed.

It will be well to deal briefly with some general principles. What follows has been pondered over for many months past, very hesitatingly, but with growing clearness Perhaps a single picture, where contrasts come out most clearly, will be the best starting point. Take a Good Friday in the mission district. Men and women have been drinking overnight, and are waiting in groups for the public-houses to open. During the three hours' service, the whole district seems given over to drink and gambling and street rows. Inside the mission is a quiet, hushed little group of worshippers, who come in reverently, one by one, and take their places silently; outside, gang after gang passes down the street shouting drunken songs; one recognises with pain the voices of Mr. * * * * and Mrs. * * * * . Then quiet again—deep and solemn—as the 'Story of the Cross is told; then once more the drunken cries, and again the quiet stillness. From the church you go to the homes: it is some dying person at the top of a high building whom you have to visit. Again the same fearful contrast: the sick dying woman on the brink of eternity, the solemn commendatory prayer; on the other side, the forces of Satan invading the very chamber of death itself, drunkenness on every side. Days like these are days of revelation, an almost open vision of the spiritual hosts of darkness around us When this has been stamped upon the mind by vision after vision of this kind, it brings with it a crushing sense of the impotence of mere clubs, entertainments, concerts, &c., to reach

the root of the evil. The homes, the individuals, the very clubs themselves, remain still the "hold of every unclean spirit," covered, perhaps, with a thin veneer of superficial improvement. The weapons used have merely grazed and tickled the skin, and dealt no deadly blow at the very heart of the evil. The negative position, "it will keep them from doing worse," "it will keep them from the public-houses," is so hopelessly weak where Satan is so strong. Merely negative good is scarcely good at all; at the first assault it breaks down, and then the last state is worse than the first. This does not mean that such things as clubs are useless in their place, but that their use is purely subsidiary. Their snare is their very attractiveness. It is easy enough to be a member of the club, and so, in a way, patronize the mission, while avoiding all the persecution and ridicule which going to church would entail. So, also, it is easy enough to come to concerts, entertainments, &c., and make these pass for more serious duties. People's minds have got confused. One continually has the assurance, "O, yes, I belong to the mission," when a person has merely gone to this or that concert. When I came to the mission, I had the very strongest hopes with regard to a kind of social work, reaching the people through all sorts of channels—one would not trouble much about anything else if only the people were "reached." Experience brings a stern schooling, but a very convincing one Three main principles gradually came out clear—

(i) Anything that was merely popular in order to attract masses of people, without the mark of sacrifice upon it, to be sternly repressed.

(ii) To build on a clear and definite religious basis, made intelligible to the people by constant teaching.

(iii) To loyally carry out every part of the Prayer Book in the daily life of the people.

This has meant restrictions in some directions, and a good deal of "bringing into line" in others, but whatever changes have been made, they have been welcomed and warmly responded to by our own people. I am more and more convinced that the truest way to help those we long to reach, is by having the standard

a high one, and not a low one. It is a mistake to "come down to their level." The higher the standard, the more, and not the less, it appeals in the long run. For the moment there may be a thinning of numbers, a seeming exclusion, but it is only for the moment while the seed is being sown. Very soon the intensity of the work tells. Then comes the harvest and the reaping time. There must be intensity before extension, the slow seed growth before the reaping. It is the white heat at the centre which is the real force and power. Let that be kept glowing and intense, and it will soon penetrate outwards. Instead of lowering the standard by popular attractions, throw your whole available time into unsparing training of your small body of people, and unceasing visiting of the multitude. Bring those outside, one by one, to your centre, appealing to them now at this crisis in their lives, and now at that, to make the definite sacrifice and take the great step forward. Then, if only we were faithful, there would be no question of reaching the multitude. Sooner or later, one by one, they would be reached, and not only reached, but gripped with a living hold; and in the meantime, even before they were individually won, their respect for Religion would have grown as they saw its seriousness, its sacrifice, its true and definite mark of the Cross, instead of a mere popular attractiveness.

Let me give concrete instances. The men's club was becoming almost purely secular; men came in to play unlimited billiards, and went out to get drink whenever they liked. By the exercise of the power of expulsion the standard has been raised. It is assumed, as a natural thing, that those who belong to the club shall come to church. After repeated trial, if they are making the club a mere convenience for cheap billiards and nothing further, they are asked to withdraw. Again with our Church Lads' Brigade, little by little the standard of membership is being raised and defined. We hope to see more and more of our lads confirmed and regular communicants, and only then will the work have proved its worth. The mothers' meeting, which seemed to be isolated from the church, has now its monthly service, and we are beginning a mothers' union. The band of

hope, which was little more than a noisy jumble, has been gradually transformed into a very reverent children's service, with catechizing; a change which the little ones themselves have learnt to love with all their hearts, and they are nearly crowding out the mission.

Our Book of Common Prayer we have gradually been able to make *common* prayer we are learning it slowly through and through, from cover to cover At this time, when our Prayer Book is so often spoken of in slighting terms, I feel bound to bear testimony to its unique power and hold among the very poorest. The intelligence chiefly needed for our wonderful prayers and collects is that of hardship, sorrow, penitence, and the like I can scarcely refrain from speaking at length on this point, out of the fulness of a very grateful heart. The Prayer Book so completely meets the deepest needs of our district, and gives the very moral fibre we so long for down here—so sober and so reverent, so strong and so subdued, so unflinching in its high standard, so balanced and dogmatic in its faith, demanding constant, regular, and sustained effort throughout the year; no sensation, no popular standard, no toning down of awful severity, no weak, indefinite, undenominational vagueness. Think of the power of this in the midst of a people exceptionally easy-going, emotional, shifting, undisciplined, whose idea of religion is taken mainly from the preacher at the street corner.

• The lengths to which the "cheapening" of religion have gone can hardly be imagined. Here are some announcements which have appeared on the walls of our district: "Sunday Evening for the People—Subject: Gladstone; band solos, Gladstone's favourite hymns, &c." "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons for Men." "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons for Women."—Everything pleasant here! or "Close of special ten-day mission, salvation testimonies by phonograph." We are in the midst of a fearful popularizing of religion, degrading the very name so much that self-respecting working men despise it. We can only thank God for the sober wisdom of our English Church, which stands out like a rock in midst of such shifting sands, and try as heartily as possible to obey her loyally in this critical time.

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While, on the one hand, religion has thus been popularized till it has become almost contemptible; on the other hand, it has been made indefinite till it has lost its strength and vital power. Meanwhile, Christ's flock is more and more scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd, wandering hopelessly in the vague wilderness of unsettled convictions; without faith or any strength of character to resist temptation when it comes like a flood.

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,
But swollen with wind and the rank mists they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread."

[I venture to insert here an extract from my notes concerning this mission, dated a year later than the report above:--" * * * * * Mission is rather hidden away. It is a basement church fully half under ground, very ill-kept outside, and not smart within; looks as if it were hampered for lack of money. I suppose it was intended to build the proper church over this one, but that may never be done now. I did not get there at night, but in the morning there were only about twenty young people of lower middle class, male and female (units, 'got hold of'). There was a considerable body of clergy and choir."]

(b) From the report of another college mission we have the following:—

We are slowly gathering a Sunday morning congregation, and the intrinsic superiority and inherent claims of the Holy Eucharist are bound to tell in time upon honest minds. The average of communicants in 1895 was a little under twenty. In 1896 it was a little over twenty-two and a half. On the Sundays before Christmas and Easter we have immediately after evensong a special service of preparation for the Holy Communion. To this meeting the whole congregation is invited to stay; with the exception of the children, who have time given them to withdraw. The service includes a public examination of conscience, conducted in accordance with the recommendations of Archbishop Benson, the missionary reading out a few very plain, pointed, personal questions, with a pause after each for those present to think privately what their own answers should be. Such a method as this is almost a necessity when dealing with those who belong to a class of society where the perception of sinfulness is often very faint, and who need to be taught their prayers. It has this further

advantage—that when others than communicants stay they can hardly help finding out that Christians do really set before themselves a very high standard, and are very far indeed from thinking themselves good enough.

[My notes of a visit to this mission read as follows:—"This Sunday morning there was nothing going on at 11.30 or so. Only a few boys were about. The altar furniture had linen covers, and so had some pictures hanging on the walls. The evening service appeared like that of a brotherhood, and was only attended by some thirty or forty, mostly children, in addition to the 'brothers' and their choir."]

(c) Let me notice the growing unanimity and keenness existing in all the College Missions. Begun as an experiment, continued among many discouragements, the College Mission movement has been proved a success, and the energy and enthusiasm of the College Missioners shows no falling off, thanks chiefly to the Bishop of Rochester in calling together the various missioners at stated times in the year. We have learnt our strength. Working previously in detached districts, the power to gauge our usefulness was wanting. I venture to suggest that could combined meetings be held at Cambridge, it would help individual colleges to understand what an important work their own College Mission really is. Finally, I would draw attention to the need of a personal visit to the mission the number of C * * * * * men who visit the mission is very small Undergraduates especially think that they will be a nuisance: if they only understood what an intense pleasure a personal visit gives the missioner I think the college would swarm into R * * * * *. The relations between the college and the mission will, no doubt, be knit closer in the future. A College Mission has peculiar claims on the services of men of that college. And the intercourse between the mission and college demands that those who work for the mission should be exclusively C * * * * * men. The future of the work we may leave to God, and I trust there will ever be C * * * * * men to carry on the work to the good of R * * * * *, the honour of an ancient foundation, and the glory of God.—(*From a Report made by a Missioner retiring after nine years of work.*)

(d) There is a great work now before our college missions of developing inter-collegiate union. My great

hope and longing is to see a complete "chain" of college missions joining hands, as it were, with one another, and girdling the congested area of poorer South London, strengthening each other with all that inter-collegiate brotherhood and *esprit de corps*, one in sympathy, in aim, in standard of work, praying for one another definitely and regularly, uniting from time to time in common worship, and, through the "love of the brotherhood" among the missionaries themselves, lifted out of isolation into an atmosphere of strength and power. I cannot say with what eagerness we look wistfully sometimes to Cambridge, and wonder when this and that great college, as yet unrepresented, will start a mission of its own, and form another member of our brotherhood.—
(*Report.*)

§ 6

EXTRACTS REFLECTING DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISCOURAGEMENT

(a) We have now completed six years of weary and anxious work amongst you, and as we look back upon the past we have had much to discourage us. Sometimes our faith has been sorely tried, and we have been tempted to give up in despair. The work has been very heavy, and yet the results so small, that we have been tempted to murmur against God and relax our energy. While "casting our bread upon the waters," according to the Divine command, the "many days" of God's good pleasure have almost proved too long for our patience. The green blade has been so long making its appearance through the soil, or the ear has been so slow in ripening for the harvest, that we have been tempted to doubt whether there was any real life in the buried seed, or any progressive development in the spiritual plant. But in the moment of our weakness, God has often had compassion on us, and encouraged us by pointing out to

us here and there a golden sheaf in the harvest field.
—(*From an interim Report in the Magazine of a poor and rough parish.*)

(b) I pray that we may be cheered by a larger attendance both at the Sunday and weekday services. The attendance at the Wednesday evening service and at the prayer meeting has for some time been a cause of sorrow. We may reckon it one of the clearest signs of spiritual life when men and women seek to God's house, and to the place where prayer is made, although it be neither new moon nor Sabbath day. Failure in the attendance of those able to lead in devotion at our weekly meeting for prayer has been the cause of real grief and disappointment. May I ask all who read this to lay these things to heart? Shall I ask in vain?—(*From the Annual Report of a parish mainly lower middle and working class.*)

(c) Daily prayer has been tried at every possible hour with equally unsatisfactory results—so far as obtaining a congregation is concerned. We have now adopted the plan of holding a shortened service at 9.15 a.m., and then catechizing the children of the day schools, who attend the service in sections. We have reason to believe that the children themselves like to come, and their presence enables us to have a bright and pleasant service every day in church, to which other people may come if they are so disposed.—(*From the Annual Report of a very mixed parish with a large floating population.*)

(d) *Mothers' Union.*

A great number of members were not present, some habitually keep away, and as the attending the meetings is one of the rules of membership, those names will have to be struck off the rolls if it continues.—(*From a Magazine of a working class and poor parish.*)

(e) Our Sunday afternoon Bible-class fluctuates, especially now the fine summer days are here: sometimes we have eighteen; sometimes—three; but *nil desperandum*, with Christ with us.—(*From a Parish Magazine.*)

§ 7

EXTRACTS REFLECTING CONFIDENCE AND THANKFULNESS

(a) It is with feelings of profound thankfulness to Almighty God for the many encouragements given, and so utterly undeserved, that I take up my pen to write the preface to this, my eighth annual report. It is with feelings of gratitude, also, to the devoted workers who are working so heartily, faithfully, and lovingly in the cause of Christ and His Church, that I write these words. The same earnest staff is with us—the same active wardens, with interest manifested in all things connected with the parish—the same persevering Sunday School superintendents, and, to a large extent, the same body of other workers.—(*From Vicar's Letter in the Report of a poor working-class parish.*)

(b) The past year has been a specially happy one. Disappointments and difficulties will from time to time appear, but growing congregations and growing schools, growing offertories and increased communicants, are great encouragements, especially when we believe, as we do, that there is along with these things that growth which is alone of real and lasting value—the growth of love and loyalty to the Lord and Master Jesus Christ. The year was memorable, secondly, for the *Mission* held last November and December by the Rev. * * * * * and the Rev. * * * * *. They do not, we know, desire any thanks for what they did, but we cannot but express our hearty appreciation of the time and prayerful labour which they gave us—a labour which, so far as can be judged by outward circumstances, was an undoubted success; a labour which has in many ways left its mark behind; a labour which resulted we believe in the real conversion of some, and in the building up and revival of many of God's own people. We sought the Divine guidance in the preparation, and at the time, and we verily believe that God heard and answered our prayers.—(*From Vicar's Letter in Report of a working class and poor parish.*)

(c) The idea that failure was impossible was founded on the consciousness that the work being God's, He would

take care of it; and He has.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in a poor parish.*)

(d) It is a great satisfaction to know that St. * * * * * maintains its place among the London churches which give the most substantial help to the work of the Church at large, and to the Diocesan Societies which exist for spreading and maintaining the cause of Christ in this great metropolis. “God is not unrighteous that He will forget your work and labour that proceedeth of love. Which love ye have showed for His Name's sake.” I trust that in the true spirit of thankful, humble love; not of emulation, but of earnest desire to extend the cause of Christ, the same support may be given in ever-increasing amount.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in the Report of a rich parish.*)

(e) Our object is the conversion and sanctification of souls. We are loyal members of the Church of England, being firmly convinced that she is the Catholic Church in this country. We preach and teach the Catholic faith in all fulness and in all its power, and we have the blessing of seeing before our eyes the constant witness of the power of the Holy Spirit on the conversion of souls from a life of sin and wickedness to a life lived in and by the strength and power of the Holy Ghost.—(*From a Statement issued on behalf of a poor parish.*)

(f) No doubt the daily Eucharist, maintained through Lent, was of real help to us all. My hope and prayer is that the day may not be very long removed when Christ's blessed service may become part of our regular daily worship as a parish. Meanwhile, it must be the endeavour of us all to more faithfully avail ourselves of the privileges already afforded, &c.—(*From the Rector's Letter in the Magazine of a working class and poor parish.*)

(g) Month by month the parish magazine tells of the work, or such parts of it as can be set down in human chronicles. Throughout the year the “Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God” has been preached, not only in the church, but in the hall and the coffee tavern, in every street and every court in the parish, and it has still been found “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.” Our machinery has been complete and

in good order. Workers have been sufficient in number, with the exception (now, alas! of many years' standing) of district visitors. Funds have been very liberally subscribed, and in almost all departments we have had evidence that God's holy spirit is working with us.

The whole congregation heard with something like dismay that Mr. * * * * * felt he must resign the office of churchwarden. The loss of Mr. * * * * * as sidesman is also a serious one.

Most sincerely and gratefully do I thank all those who have so heartily, and often with much self-sacrifice, devoted themselves to the work of God in this parish to all, my gratitude and the gratitude of the parish are due. I can do but little in return for their help, but I am sure a rich reward awaits them at the hands of the Divine Master whose stewards we all are. May they have *here and now* true joy in their work: even the "Joy of Harvest."—(*From the Vicar's Letter in the Report of a working class and poor parish in which a popular church draws largely from outside.*)

(h) It has been quaintly said that "in olden times the chalices were of wood and the priests of gold." Expand "priests" into "workers" and I do not think we need fear comparison with any times. There is a terrible dead weight of ignorance, indifference, and spiritual torpor. Religion is not in evidence among the London masses, and though not dead, is undeveloped and of feeble vitality. But there is a leaven at work in the midst of it which is active and of splendid energy and faith. This is the great encouragement of our times. To be in the midst of all this is a continual inspiration. We have not been standing still. The Church and its services are the natural centre and ought to be the spring and source round which all efforts of Christian influence group themselves and grow. It is a hard matter to win back the great body of our population to love of their Church and worship. We want to make more use of our churches, as far as we can without loss of reverence and without lowering the ideal of spiritual worship. I think the reverent performances of sacred music have been helpful in this direction. With efforts such as these supple-

menting the ordinary services, we are trying to make the church a centre of holy influences, both to those who love it and to some who have become strangers.—*(From the Vicar's Letter in the Report of a parish largely lower middle and working class.)*

(i) We are also in need of more personal help. We want district visitors, Sunday school teachers and helpers with the boys' brigade. We are threatened with the loss of the two men who have made our boys' brigade a mighty power for good in the neighbourhood. . . . But this brings to mind the band of self-denying and zealous workers who during the last year have been my fellow-helpers unto the kingdom of God: to them all, clerical and lay, I tender now my hearty thanks. Let us not, dear friends, be weary in well doing; we have and must expect to have our disappointments and discouragements, and sometimes even our labour may seem to be in vain in the Lord; but this cannot be. Let us gird up the loins of our mind—be steadfast, and hope to the end, and in due season we shall reap if we faint not.—*(From the Report of an outlying parish.)*

(j) In these days of unrest and suspicion, when voices of intolerance and bigotry are often heard, it is a matter of great thankfulness that harmony has reigned in our congregation during the past year. We cannot all think alike, nor can the services ever be conducted as each individual would wish, but we can one and all determine to pray that the spirit of union and love may ever be manifested, and that everything may be done for the honour and glory of God.—*(Report of a large and wealthy parish.)*

(k) We devote our very best efforts to the teaching of the children. Give us the children of to-day, we may say, and we will show you the Churchmen of to-morrow.—*(Report of working class and poor parish—High Church.)*

§ 8

VARIOUS OPINIONS AND REFLECTIONS

(1) *Position of the Church.*—The question of compliance with the rubrics is not the simple question that it seems to be. If these rubrics are literally binding upon the Church—and the bishops and clergy, remember, do not constitute the Church—then the obligation goes further than some people realize, and I much doubt whether the laity are prepared for what it involves—

1. Daily service in every parish.
2. Strict observance of the fasts and festivals as enjoined by the directions of the Book of Common Prayer.
3. Baptisms after the second lesson.
4. Disuse of all hymns, except one after the third collect.
5. A sermon in every Communion service.
6. Communion at least three times a year for all who claim to be parishioners.

Are not these points enough to show that the present position is unworkable? To say that the bishop of each diocese is to decide which of these rubrics is to be observed and which not, is only to make confusion more confused. The duty of the bishop is to administer the laws of the Church, not to make them

But the whole agitation is lamentable for a higher reason still. There is a greater conflict to be fought than any conflict between two extreme parties in the Church. It is the conflict between irreligion and Christ—between faith in God and those who, if they do not say, “There is no God,” live as though there were none.

You do not find them only in the slums; you do not find them only in Bethnal Green and Whitechapel—you find them in the neglect of prayer and worship and Sacraments, in which a very large number of so-called Christians in the West End are content to live and die. We talk of our crowded churches and our hundreds or thousands of communicants. They are but a drop in the ocean of our West End life, and outside of them are the thousands who never enter a church and never take the Sacrament, who are living, if you are to judge by outward

tests—and although I should be the last to say they are the only tests, they are part, at any rate, of the standards of Christ—are living without God in the world.

And the pity of it is that all the time the Church is wasting her strength and dividing her forces, and while partisans on the one side or the other are clamouring over this or that detail of ceremonial, which no one believes to be of essential importance, or this or that expression, which is seldom if ever necessary to the conveyance of the truth, the people in their thousands, East and West, are drifting further and further from their old religious moorings. Souls are being lost to the Church—far worse, to God; and earnest, thoughtful men, growing disgusted and weary of it all, are turning their back upon the old Faith and asking for a religion that has less of controversy and more of Christ.—(*From Vicar's Annual Letter* [1899].)

(2) First and foremost stands the work of education—religious education for young and old—the toughest job we have to face. Its peculiar difficulty lies in that in religion as in art, everyone has convictions; whilst few possess knowledge. Teaching therefore is apt to be resented as much as it is needed.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(3) The work of evangelizing the masses in London is beset with the greatest difficulties. For the indifference of many is so gross, the habits of others so foreign to real vital godliness, while with a third class the disposition to regard all church visitors—clergy, missionaries and deaconesses—as merely relieving officers, is so deep-seated, that in spite of frequent visiting, earnest entreaty, and services and meetings and classes to suit all conditions of men, women and children, very few comparatively identify themselves with any fixed place of worship, be it church, chapel or undenominational mission hall.—(*From a Vicar's Sketch of the History of his Parish.*)

(4) Personally, in a large working-class parish, I come across very little atheism. Most men believe in a God to whom they ascribe their own vague humanitarian impulses and their own lax moral standard—a God who makes small demands on them for worship or right conduct, and with whom they are consequently on the best of

terms. They have no sense of sin; they have nothing on their conscience; they have never done anything wrong (which means, at the outside, that they have never come within the policeman's grasp); they positively bask in the sense of the approbation of their indulgent Deity. It is not as a rule that they object to Christianity—for the most part they call themselves Christians, and regard their religion (alluded to above) as the Christian religion. The simple fact is, they won't take the trouble either to seek for the truth or to face its consequences. Now this state of things is very serious; at times it drives one almost to despair. But if we are to understand the malady accurately and so be able to deal with it hopefully, we must widen our outlook still further. There is general indifference to religion: granted. But is this indifference confined to religion? Certainly not; it extends among the working class to practically every subject beyond physical needs and enjoyments. It is not religious apathy, but universal apathy, that we have to deal with; it is not so much a downfall of Christian belief as a general weakening of moral purpose that we have to face. My people can be galvanized into jerky and evanescent excitement in any direction. They are ready to "demonstrate" at any time and for almost any object. They will insist vehemently on Labour Representation and Progressive programmes, but do not take the trouble to turn out even to vote. They will attend a "mission," especially if attractively advertised, and go away full of good resolutions, but never appear in church again till next "Watch-night Service."—(*By the Rector of a working-class and poor parish.*)

(5) It seemed to him that it was an easy thing to get people to attend in large numbers any kind of meeting, provided the gathering was not of a religious character. He sometimes attended a political meeting, and he never came away from such a gathering without remarking to himself what a power there was in politics to stir the masses, and what impotence there seemed in the Gospel to do the same.—(*From a Vicar's Speech at a Ruri-decanal conference, reported in his Parish Magazine.*)

(6) The masses appear to have lost all interest in the

Divine Being. They ignore Him as though He did not exist.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(7) By far the greatest battle of the future seems to be to bring back the reverence for home, not only in our people, but in our legislators and employers and landlords. The overcrowding, the huge model dwellings, the vast Board schools, the enormous factories, the various schemes for dealing with the "masses," all these are slowly but surely sapping the foundations of our home life. . . . I am sure that our work must be, much more than it is, the building up of families and not the conversion of individuals. . . . There is no dealing with the people in the mass.—(*From the Report of a College Mission.*)

(8) *A Plea for Compassion on the Multitudes.*

Our experiences as church-workers in * * * * * have taught us to look upon these multitudes as so many men and women who ought to be thought of, who ought to be looked upon, who ought to be worked for, as so many unfortunate victims of the oppressive side of our modern civilization How it is to be remedied, the wise man who is to tell us has not yet arisen, but in the meantime is it not what Professor Moule has said so beautifully? Is it not a pressure of the hand of God to make us feel kindly towards these inarticulate and suffering multitudes? there is only one power which will save this multitude from the evils they have brought upon themselves, and from the evils they suffer at the hands of other men, and that power is the grace of God in Jesus Christ. We do not undervalue other reforming powers—the power of education, the power of sanitary laws, the power of more social facilities for our people, but the main thing, the indispensable thing, is that Jesus Christ in all His loving and saving power should be made a reality and a necessity to these multitudes of our land.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(9) Every care should be taken to maintain family worship in our own households its blessed effect will soon be felt in all your homes—aye, and in the parish.—(*From the Magazine of a mixed parish, mainly middle and lower middle class.*)

(10) I think it is a bad thing to bring young people out from their homes in the middle of the night in order to excite their feelings by a sensational service or a highly emotional appeal from the pulpit. I used in former years to preach Watch-Night sermons. I found very solid reason to believe that they did more harm than good. Young people are better in their beds than at a Watch-Night service.—(*From a Parish Magazine.*)

(11) The minds of children absorb dogmatic teaching like a sponge.—(*From High Church Vicar's Report—poor parish.*)

(12) There are many cases in which probably the best friend a little child has is its Sunday school teacher.—(*From the Annual Report of a mixed parish.*)

(13) A large [day] school gives a wonderful knowledge and hold over the parish in general Without it I should feel hopelessly lost.—(*From Annual Report of a poor parish—High Church.*)

(14) We sometimes wish that children could be always children. Who could help feeling often bitterly disappointed at the gradual deterioration as they grow older, of children whom we have known well.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(15) [Reference is made to] “the great and beautiful institution of Confession, so perfectly adapted to the needs of our hearts.” [Through it] “we find the very thing we need. We need not be left to vague or deceptive emotion or to scruples which impair the elasticity and joy of Christian life: in what our Book of Homilies calls the ‘Sacrament of Penance’ we may bring our repentance to be deepened, tried, perfected by sacramental contact, so to speak, with Christ, and above all to be crowned with His merciful pardon by the judicial absolution of His priest.”—(*From Vicar's Letter in the Magazine of a lower middle, working class and poor parish.*)

(16) A High Church vicar reports as the saying of an East End girl, that the one thing really worth living for is to deepen one's penitence.

(17) The true idea of Faith, the root principle in Christianity, is so to hear as willingly to obey the voice of God.—(*The Curate of a poor parish; from the Magazine.*)

(18) Each year I feel less inclined to write an elaborate letter to accompany our Report, and that for various reasons.

If one touches on the details of the works at all or speaks of the individual workers, the task is almost endless, and having once begun, it is very difficult to know where to stop. Besides this, there always remains the fact that the most real work of a parish is just what cannot be spoken of. The truest test of progress is not the multiplicity of organizations, the size of the congregation, or the number of names on the communicants' roll, but something so much deeper down that no report can ever possibly touch it—viz., the measure in which the souls of men and women are being given to God, and their lives becoming what God intended they should become. Now this is a thing that no one can test—something that “the world's coarse thumb and finger” must “fail to plumb;” and so it is best to say nothing about it.—(*From the Report of a wealthy parish, containing some poor and degraded.*)

The success or failure we cannot really know, for results of Christian work are known only to God. . . . The fight is fierce and unceasing with the powers of darkness.—(*From Report of a parish mainly working class and poor.*)

(19) In this parish we cannot forget that we are on outpost duty in the Church of Christ, and at present, of course, there is no outward sign that Christ is in occupation here. There is only one way in which He can ever enter the homes of our people. He must enter them when we enter them. If each one of us was like Christ in humility, love, faith and patience, we should take Him with us as we went in and out amongst men.—(*From the Vicar's Report of a parish mainly working class.*)

(20) We cannot deny that our present task in this church and parish is that of holding on. Every prayer we pray, and every effort we make counts, and will some day be seen to have counted, but not yet. Endurance may easily degenerate into a hard and sullen thing, but the secret of Christian endurance lies in “seeing Him who is invisible.” Keeping Him before our eyes, we

shall not desert our post, nor shall we be stiffened and hardened by apparent failure, nor shall we really fail. . . . —(From the Vicar's Letter in the Annual Report of a parish mainly working class.)

(21) I have only described a small part of the work of this * * * * * parish, and yet I have shown enough to convince you that the Church is not standing idle I want you to understand clearly* that we have not "got hold" of the district in the way imaginative persons sometimes describe on platforms. The Church in the world is a very small minority, and I cannot learn that it has ever been otherwise; but this I firmly believe, that in East London we gather small knots of people together in every parish who set a standard of life, and exercise an influence far beyond their own circle. And if it were not for the Church in East London I cannot imagine what would become of Society—it would be a barrel without hoops.

(22) As to the work itself which we are endeavouring, by God's help, to carry on, it is always a difficult matter to write or speak about, for who can really know its merits or demerits but God Himself? Of what value, after all, are statistics? All we can say is that we are trying to do our best, and the result we must leave in wiser hands than ours.—(*From the Vicar's Report of a poor parish.*)

(23) The conditions of the parish and its population are not such as to lead one to expect the startling and pathetic stories which those who labour at the East End are able to record. Ours is simply a work of continuous, plodding effort, quite free from glamour and excitement, and almost untouched by romance.—(*From Vicar's Letter in Report of parish of lower middle and working classes.*)

(24) The resident clergyman whose parish is what is called "going down," knows the hopelessness of the task before him. Every year he has more people, and every year less funds, until he is almost driven to despair. The separating influence of the "season ticket" system is keenly felt. The working man goes a little way by tramcar to his poor home. His master goes by train further out to his comfortable suburb. Thus the personal

influence of employer over employed is becoming almost nil, and the master has not the slightest domestic interest in the man; nor does the wife of the employer know, even by sight, the wife of any of her husband's workmen. It is left for the Church of England to endeavour to establish friendliness between estranged classes of Society. But to do this, there must be organized sympathy by vigorous Church centres of social and religious life.—(From a leaflet urging the formation of the new Diocese of Southwark.)

(25) The foundations of his work (writes one incumbent, referring to the work of his predecessor), were laid deep in the hearts and consciences of his people, and it endures.—*(From the Report of a poor parish.)*

(26) No Church has opportunities such as the English Church for reconciling differences, for she purposely embraces many minds. It may, at an election crisis, seem to be a weakness that she cannot marshal her voters as one man, but it is really, for those who look deeper, her strength, and one of the causes that preserves religion in England. “*Ou Catholique ou Athéiste*” is the French alternative, with us there are alternatives other than that. I, for one, am thankful.—*(From the Rector's Letter in the Report of a parish mainly working class.)*

(27) * * * * * brought to his task that “saving common sense of English piety” which has ever proved the salt of our national life. Men and women who have had this schooling are no narrow bigots, but English Catholics in the noblest sense; full, on the one hand, of that sense of responsibility which a God-given trust and a great historic past create; full, on the other hand, of a venturesomeness, an enterprise, and progressive energy, which is born of the faith in an ever-present Christ and the inspiration of a Spirit who leads us forward, ever seeking the city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.—*(From the Rector's Letter in the Report of a parish mainly working class.)*

(28) “*On Stony Ground.*”—. . . . We have no rich or even prosperous parishioners to whom to appeal, no large manufacturers or merchants carry on their business here.

The population (numbering over eight thousand) is composed of struggling artisans, small traders, makers of such curious commodities as dolls' eyes, small corks, tin toys, toothpicks, and pill boxes; and, lastly, many of the unemployed or unemployable poor.

Religion apart, I can conceive no more sensible and humane organization for coping with the evils of our day than our National Church and Parochial System. But a system without agents and means to carry it into practice is like machinery without a motive power, and I fear nothing short of a definite and universal upholding and revivifying of our system will save it from the fate of any other organization which becomes unable for its work.

That system was based upon the presumption that the properous merchants and manufacturers would reside among their poor brethren, and I hold that the modern separation of the rich and the poor is, both from a religious and a political standpoint, a great evil, and the fountain head of the dark and rising tide of socialism. The wealthy and refined, who presumably least need religious instruction and social enlightenment, are dwelling in quiet and luxury in the suburbs,* their beautiful churches crowded, their social and charitable organizations flourishing like the flowers in their conservatories, while the complement of poverty they have left behind lies huddled by families, exposed to want, to disease, and immorality, and all the attacks of a despairing infidelity. Meanwhile, the organization which should, which can, ameliorate and counteract these very evils, depends, if not for its existence, yet certainly for its efficiency, *upon the support of those whom it was designed to relieve.*—(*From a leaflet.*)

* I have received several kind contributions from such parishes.
[adds the vicar].

(29) What we need at the present time is some wholesome pessimism which sees the worst—and feels unhappy about the worst—and persists in making known the worst. This is the kind of pessimism which has done much to arouse a feeling of concern for foreign mission work.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(30) You will find a missionary box properly used a

great help to your inner life. It is a grand plan to have resort to it *continually* as a record of blessings as they occur. . . . It is of little use to be in a scramble to have something in it, just when the opening time comes round.—(*From the Report of a parish containing many middle and lower middle class.*)

(31) In helping that most noble cause of Foreign Missions I believe we are doing something at least to prepare the way for and to hasten the time of the Second Coming of our blessed Lord and Master Jesus Christ, Who has made His return conditional on the proclamation of His Gospel in all the world.—(*From Vicar's Letter in Report of a parish containing many of the lower middle class.*)

(32) We have many blessings to record . . . first among these the most beneficent gift of £500—a Christmas offering from "A Friend"—directed, we believe, by the hand of our heavenly Father in answer to earnest prayer.—(*From the Report of a parish mainly working class and poor.*)

(33) If money is really needed the best way of getting it is to ask for it, and it usually comes. I hope we are getting out of a bad habit of coaxing people to give money by means of bazaars and entertainments. Whenever we have to ask the response is wonderfully generous.—(*From the Vicar's Letter in Report of a parish mainly working class.*)

CHAPTER III

THE NONCONFORMIST PROTESTANT CHURCHES

§ 1

THE CONGREGATIONALISTS

‘OURS,’ said one of the Congregationalist ministers, ‘is not the Church of the poor.’ He might have gone further and have said ‘not of the poor, nor of the working class, not of the rich nor of the fashionable.’ The Congregationalist Church is more than any other the Church of the middle classes, its membership being practically confined within the limits of the upper and lower sections of those included under that comprehensive title. Where these classes prevail Congregationalists are to be found in force; where not, their churches lead a struggling existence; and, when owing to some change in the social character of a neighbourhood, old supporters leave, the chapels fall into disuse and one by one are either closed or pass into other hands.

‘But,’ continues the minister already quoted, ‘among our own people the church is invaluable,’ and to this we, too, have borne witness. The wide aims and remarkable successes of this body in North London, as well as the extent to which their general methods are repeated by almost all the other religious bodies in that neighbourhood, or wherever similar social conditions obtain, have been noticed in previous volumes.

These methods are very social in character and depend upon the presence among the members of a certain degree of culture, and upon the absence of any very wide class-differences between them. The result is that with the Congregationalist Churches the development of the social side of religious activity attains its highest point. In one case it is even complained that 'there are too many societies and meetings, so that many of the young people spend all their spare time in attending them, and see nothing of their homes.' In these churches, too, the value of the sermon is at its highest; they provide the greatest scope for the power of the pulpit. 'The life of the Church depends upon the sustained attraction of preaching,' says one of their ministers. 'I was a good preacher once,' said another, 'and thousands came to hear me; but you want youth for it; the power passes.' 'The popularity of a church depends on the preacher; the people go to the man they like.'

The eloquence of the preacher attracts and binds a congregation together and stimulates congregational activity, but this it does by reason of its spiritual force. Its high object is 'to make of the church a religious home, not a theological battlefield.' Politics are rarely touched upon, and if the pastor feels it his duty to do so, the congregations do not like it. One of the ministers we have conferred with, recalled an occasion when a deputation from his congregation remonstrated with him, saying, 'We share your views, but politics are not what we come to hear from the pulpit.'

The form of the buildings used, the character of the services and the whole organization of the work, tend to emphasize the leadership of the pastor. The most typical shape of church is octagonal, with galleries on all sides, and roof rising to a low dome. One gallery is occupied by the organ and choir. In front of it is a high and roomy pulpit, at the foot of which on a low platform stands the Communion table, with seats

at either side for the deacons. In the pulpit the minister, if seated, retires almost out of sight, but when he stands forward to speak, every eye can see and every ear hear him. The whole service is intensely personal. The prayers are his. At times he truly leads the congregation, speaking for them and carrying them with him to the throne of grace; but at other times he seems rather to be addressing the Almighty in the presence of the congregation, calling His attention to their needs, or to be speaking to the congregation in the presence of God calling their thoughts to the things of God. In this way, as with the prophets, the appeals to God and the congregation often follow each other: as strophe and anti-strophe. Into the reading of the lessons from the Bible he throws much special meaning, often pausing to reiterate some phrase or to interject the expression of some thought suggested to him by the words. Even of the hymns, by reading with expression the first verse (as is customary) or some selected verses, he makes a vehicle for his thoughts.

Before the sermon there is always a long string of notices concerning the affairs of the congregation and the fixtures for the week. To these also a strong personal flavour is imparted, even when they are of the most simple and businesslike nature, the congregation being congratulated, beseeched, or rebuked, as the case may require. The tone may be quite playful or very serious, or anything between. Then, when this is over and he begins to preach to his people, it is with a confidence in himself born of the certainty of their confidence in him. He can do his best, and his best is often very good indeed. His audience listen with close attention. Sometimes a hymn, or part of a hymn, is sung after the sermon, but more often the benediction, solemnly uttered, ends the service.

The people do not hurry out. A few may begin to

move and greetings are exchanged and whispered words pass ; but the greater number remain sitting quietly in their places. Meanwhile the minister, descending from his pulpit, traverses the aisle and speaks to this one or that in making for the main entrance, where there is further lingering and conversation and much hand-shaking. Outside friendly groups gather, and as the congregation slowly streams away it often seems to fill the street with its numbers. Surely these people may repeat the words of David, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'"

The qualification for membership varies with different churches as to doctrinal assertion. Thus in one case : "The Church welcomes to its fellowship any who have through Christ become children of God and who wish to confess the name of their Saviour and according to His command to live and work in the love of the brethren as His disciples," to which the response of those who join is : "We, the undersigned, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour from sin, and united in His Body by the one Spirit as members one of another, do solemnly enter into a covenant with Him the Head, and with each other as Members, to walk together in all God's ways," &c. In another case the Church is described as admitting to membership 'all who give satisfactory evidence of conversion to God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,' and Dr. Dale is quoted as to the decay of theological tradition, and Congregational Churches spoken of as the fitting home, "not, indeed, for those to whom the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Prince and Saviour of mankind are doubtful, who have no gospel to preach and who ought not to preach till they have one—but for all who are unable to find in any human system of doctrine, in the confessions and creeds of any Church, a satisfactory account of the transcendent manifestation of the love and righteousness of God."

‘Membership of our Church,’ says one leading London Congregationalist, ‘is open to all who profess to love Jesus Christ and a desire to follow in His footsteps. We ask no inquisitorial questions as to theological belief, recognising as we do that religion is of the heart and not of the intellect, a life and not a philosophy ;’ and adds that his greatest aim has been to show that without a church, without a chapel, without a Bible, he could still, through the lessons taught by our social and political activities, lead people to the Highest, that we call God.

Whatever the degree of orthodoxy, the declaration generally includes in substance if not in words ‘the profession of a share in the spirit and purpose of Christ and such evidence of the same as is afforded by willingness to take part in Christian work.’ *

In the organization of the work the pastor is *ex officio* at the head of everything, but he is a constitutional sovereign. No part of the administration depends on him. He assumes no financial responsibility. It is indeed his business to bring financial needs before his congregation and to appeal for funds, but all money matters are left in the hands of the elected deacons, and from them, in the case of the successful churches of this community, he receives punctually the stipend, as a rule a handsome one, which it was agreed he should be paid when he accepted the pastorate.

* The declaration of faith adopted by the Congregational Union and published in their Year Book, may, perhaps, be regarded as an effort to hold fast where it was recognised that there is some danger of slipping away. In a preliminary note it is stated that this declaration is not intended to be “put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required.” The Congregationalists, while “disallowing the utility of creeds and articles of religion as a bond of union, and protesting against subscriptions to any human formularies as a term of communion . . . are yet willing to declare, for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to everyone the most perfect liberty of conscience.”

The difference between this and the situation in the bulk of the endowed churches of the Establishment is very striking: the Congregationalist, freed from money cares and able to share, unprofessionally and unpressed, in the pleasant generousities of well-ordered expenditure: the Churchman, his private means as well as stipend sucked into the vortex of the common purse of the Church, harassed by anxiety, doubtful as to his duty, and degraded by the constant need to beg.

•Congregational activities, self-supported and self-managed, flow strongly under the presidency of the pastor, who to some extent guides, but whose main business it is to inspire, and to contrive so far as possible that all his people share in the interests of congregational life. The whole system tends at once to emphasize the pastor's leadership and to leave him free to lead. It is, indeed, complained that his lack of executive responsibility is too complete, with the result that sometimes more things are started than can be properly maintained. Again, we may contrast the position of such a pastor with that of the vicar of a parish, worn out with the details of his work and the incessant calls upon his time from 'tedious and irrelevant visitors ;' and unable to obtain opportunity for undisturbed study except by flying to some public library. •

In addition to finance and administration, the pastor is also freed to a great extent as to questions of church discipline, the active responsibility for which rests with the deacons or elders. If any members become slack in attendance it is for these to visit and remonstrate ; it is their business to watch over the morals of the congregation, and if any offend, it is before the deacons and, in the last resort, before the Church meeting, that they will be arraigned.

•Thus the Church, a completely organized and self-constituted body, having chosen a spiritual leader, rejoices to follow him and give him honour ; he is the

Queen Bee of their hive ; on him the life of the hive depends.

In addition to all that is done among their own members, the activities of these great churches always include large Sunday schools, attended by working-class children, and in most cases separate missions for work among the poor. 'This,' says one of our witnesses, 'is the best work done ;' but adds that 'it is good done to themselves rather than to others.' It is as part of the Congregational life that it must be regarded. Much of this duty falls to the Societies of Christian Endeavour, which now exist in almost every church. As regards the missions themselves a feeling is expressed that too much is done for them by the parent church ; and that it would be better if they were made more independent and more responsible.

That which I have described is a very efficient religious system, applicable where there are no insurmountable differences of class or education. But beyond this limitation it has its faults, of which the chief is that, beyond self-confidence, it is apt to engender a spirit of self-satisfaction. We have not here the overpowering sense of unworthiness which seeks God in humiliation and prostration of soul and finds support in the ordinances of His Church, nor the spiritual struggles of a sinful nature conscious of its need for regeneration and finding it in the power of faith and in abandonment of the will to the immediate inspiration of God ; nor is there here the humility of intellectual doubt that has learnt to live in semi- or even total darkness with abiding faith. When we are told by one that 'my young people are safely over the period of doubt,' it only means that they, and their pastor too, perhaps, have so far escaped it. A leading Nonconformist, not himself a Congregationalist minister, but who has unequalled opportunity of knowing the facts, says that 'the young people of the middle

and lower middle class are no longer inclined, as was the case twenty years ago, to assume a conflict between religion and science. This has passed by, and teaching as he does, and as he always has done, an "applied Christianity," he now finds that when men come to him it is rather to ask in what way religion will give them help and add to the brightness of life. The young women, on the other hand, are much more critical than they have ever been in the past, and the kind of difficulty that they bring, often turning on the authority of the Bible and showing a reflection of modern textual criticism of the Scriptures, seems to him a sign of "the intellectual awakening" of the sex.

The lack of intensity of religious feeling is, perhaps, a necessary, and certainly it is a natural accompaniment of its diffusion and social success. Amongst those to whom religion comes in this guise there are the energetic and the lazy; there are those who can and those who cannot be relied upon; the steadfast, who stick to what they undertake, and those who can stand to nothing long; but the 'heroic little band of earnest souls' which brings solace amid general failure, is not found. The causes that bring it into existence elsewhere are not present here.

In doctrine the tendency on the whole is towards unorthodoxy; interpreting the belief in Christ, not primarily as that which involves faith in the great sacrifice of a risen Saviour, but rather as the acceptance of an ideal affecting human life and human relationships, which may be described as 'Christian humanitarianism.' One effect of this change is mentioned as being seen in the considerable numbers of those who, while they may make no profession of faith, attach themselves to religious organizations as fellow-workers and, it is added, whose enrolment, even, in this capacity, would have been impossible not many years ago.

In some of the churches, however, the teaching is as

uncompromising as amongst the Baptists, and except on the question of baptism almost exactly the same, but with the Congregationalists each church stands more completely by itself. There is very little attempt at uniformity, and in practice we find every shade represented till we reach the standpoint of Unitarianism. As a rule it is the pastor whose views change. Preaching one thing, he gradually comes to believe another. The old views may be true in some sense, but worn threadbare with daily use, he, more than anyone, sees clearly the weakness of the arguments commonly relied on for their support. There are instances in which, when this happens, the preaching of an advanced or advancing doctrine carries the congregation along with it. More often doctrinal subjects are quietly dropped. There are ministers with whom the old foundations are shaken while new ones have not been found. No new building has arisen. The old beliefs are not abandoned, but are held with less confidence, and it may be only by an effort of mental gymnastics, even in the study. But still they are held; and when pronouncement is necessary the congregation is well satisfied. The hearers know that they have heard a great sermon. By it they are not roused to criticism. They simply rejoice to feel that the faith which they desire to retain has been gloriously upheld. To the pastor, the effort is likely to be costly. He may himself find new force of application in old arguments or deeper meanings in old words, but he cannot but be oppressed by the weight of those whose minds are unopened, bound down by convention and tradition. For such as these, what has he done, but confirm them in their narrowness?

If sometimes the opinions of the congregation outrun those of their pastor, it is likely to be because of unorthodox newcomers; people for whom Unitarianism is too much of a sect, and who are glad to find them-

selves in general sympathy with a larger community. Their presence is a difficulty, and is not welcomed. It only occurs with congregations of rather upper middle-class people. Unitarian opinions have as yet attained no hold among the lower middle class.

On the whole, the influence of the Congregationalists is more social than religious, but it is good and wholesome, and being without exaltation is free from the dangers of reaction.

§ 2

THE BAPTISTS

The strong effort made to maintain unity of doctrine is an essential characteristic of the Baptist as compared with the Congregationalist position, and throughout the whole body the teaching is very definite. This is naturally accompanied by acute consciousness of differences when they occur, although to any but themselves the points upon which the orthodox Baptists split into sections seem often unimportant. They turn largely on questions of Church government and of religious practices, but so interwoven are these with questions of creed that they cannot be disentangled.

Many years ago amalgamation was attempted, and succeeded so far as to make the large united body now usually known simply as Baptists, out of what were then known under the names of 'General,' 'New Connexion,' and 'Calvinistic,' 'Strict' or 'Particular' Baptists. But not all would join, and the little chapels of these more exclusive sections are to be found in all parts of London, each with a small and attached body of adherents. Those who now claim the name of 'General Baptists' drifted away from orthodoxy, and are practically Unitarian in doctrine, but there is only

one congregation of them in London. On the other hand there are several representatives of what is called the 'Old Baptist Union,' formed in 1880 with the object of reviving the doctrine and practice embodied in the Confession of 1660 from which, so we were informed by one of the representatives of this revival, there has been much falling away on such matters as the appointment of elders, the dedication of infants, and especially with reference to the laying on of hands and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that this form helped to ensure and illustrate. Those who take the title 'Particular,' believe that Christ died for a definite number of persons, and for particular individuals alone, thus limiting salvation to these 'elect.' The 'Strict' Baptists, while adopting the ordinary tenets and practices of other Baptists, make these, and especially baptism by total immersion, a necessary condition of membership, and refuse to allow any but members to partake of the bread and wine. In such matters exact observance may perhaps go for as much as sound doctrine. Of one Strict Baptist chapel we were told that it stood alone in its denomination in being prepared to modify the rule of total immersion in favour of a woman to whom the rite was likely to prove fatal!

The 'Open' Baptists, as they are sometimes called, in contradistinction to the 'exclusive' character of the others, form the main body. They believe that Christ died for all, and that a man's salvation depends on his acceptance or rejection of Christ; and will permit any believers in the Lord Jesus to take the Communion. The strength of religious life in their large congregations has been noted again and again in the foregoing volumes. Their 'Tabernacles,' always imposing structures, are placed in leading thoroughfares in or on the edge of the most populous districts, within easy access of people of every class but especially of the

lower middle and upper working classes, from whom, together with some of strictly middle class, the congregations are drawn. On the whole they touch a lower grade than the Congregationalists, and where there is no difference of class between the adherents of these two bodies, there seems to be a divergence of character and disposition.

The East London Tabernacle, situated in Burdett Road near the corner of the Mile End Road, and the Shoreditch Tabernacle in the Hackney Road, where it joins the High Street, accommodate the largest popular congregations in London. In both of them the working class prevails, together with that portion of the lower middle which is almost indistinguishable from the upper working class. And in a less marked degree it is the same with all the Baptist churches north of the Thames, where the congregations are always of rather a lower class than those of the Congregationalists, and in most cases include a considerable contingent from the working classes. To this rule the well-known chapel in Westbourne Park may be an exception, the congregation and the methods here approaching very closely in character to those of the Congregationalists. In South London the situation is different. There the Congregationalists are comparatively weak, and the Baptists reap the benefit. Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road (which though not Baptist by constitution has had a Baptist as pastor for several years), and the Metropolitan Tabernacle (Spurgeon) have middle or lower middle-class congregations, and for the most part touch the poorer classes only through their missions. But in all congregations of Baptists there is a considerable degree of class variety, and amongst them, in South London as elsewhere, they reach the lowest class of independent-minded church-goers, so that in their case we do not hear the usual cry—as from the people—of ‘not for us.’ The

Baptist views of life, of the relations between soul and body, of sin and its consequences, of redemption and regeneration, and the ways of God towards man, are shared at any rate by some of the working classes.

These views are somewhat austere. Hell plays fully as great a part as Heaven ; pleasure is distrusted as a wile of the Devil, and the personality of the Evil One retains a reality which in the case of other sects has begun to fade.

Such convictions have their origin in the eternal contest between flesh and spirit. They are not emotional aspirations, but the last strongholds of struggling souls. They are, perhaps, more in accordance with the male than the female character, and in fact the Baptist community is virile beyond any other Christian body. Among the awful personal realities of such views of life, class sinks to nothingness, while differences of religious discipline and faith spring into prominence. If broadly the lines of class remain ; if, though all except the fashionable are included, the bulk of the members are of middle and lower middle class—it is because the life circumstances of that class, acting on a not uncommon type of mind, tend to these stern opinions. Minds of firm or perhaps coarse texture— independent and responsible, if rather heavy—unable to take sin, or anything else, lightly : such as these are apt to be fostered by middle-class education and habits, and to such of these as are spiritually awakened the Baptist faith appeals with force. To it their conscience responds. The struggle with the flesh continues, but the burthen of their sin has been taken away ; their souls have found the anchorage and the hope they need. With this faith, too, there is concurrent evil. As the attitude of the Congregationalists leads to self-sufficiency, so that of the Baptists brings with it a too obtrusive piety, and so provides the material out of which hypocrisy contrives her hateful cloak.

The order of the service in Open Baptist Churches, and in those of the Congregationalists, is practically the same, that is : opening hymn, short prayer, lesson from scripture, second hymn, long prayer, and usually a second lesson, third hymn (during which the collection is taken up), notices given out from the pulpit or by one of the church officers, sermon, final hymn, and benediction. The sermon lasts from thirty-five to forty minutes, and the entire service fully an hour and a half. This order applies to both morning and evening service on Sunday. At some Baptist churches a hymn and sermonette, specially adapted for the children, are introduced before the sermon proper, and the minister may perhaps give the children some text to find and think over during the week. If they come with their parents they will stay till the end of the service, but those coming from the schools troop out when their portion ends. The children's service is liked by everyone. It answers to the family side of religious feeling, which among the Baptists is strong (as always when men are prominent); and may be welcomed, perhaps, as softening a little the prevailing sternness.

The singing of hymns is universal, but the introduction of a choir or of part-singing, or of any musical instrument beyond a tuning fork, has only been allowed after much hesitation, and still is far from universal. The Baptists, however, have felt the flow of the tide in these directions and do not fear so much as formerly the adoption of practices which have been associated in their minds with priestcraft and prelacy. Even anthems are occasionally sung, though, as a rule, hymns in which all can join are preferred. But, given an organ, an organist, and a choir; and music will surely make its way in any church.

A Baptist congregation is no fortuitous concourse of individuals, but is a strongly constituted church, and thus

does not depend so directly as do those of the Congregationalists on pastoral inspiration ; but still the sermon retains its full importance. It is recognised as providing the spiritual food needed, and the fact that the tie of the members to the church is strong, only makes it the more necessary that the food there provided should be good. A world of pains is taken to secure the right man. Months quite commonly, and sometimes years elapse before a vacancy can be satisfactorily filled. The man must be perfectly sound in doctrine as well as strong as a preacher, and powerful in prayer. Meanwhile the vacant place is filled by 'supplies.' In the Baptist community there are many men who hold themselves ready for such casual engagements, and others will come as recognised candidates for the post. Moreover, failing a supply from without, a Baptist congregation is always prepared to conduct its own services. In one case we noted, the pastor, after a severe illness, was away for some months, but everything was kept going, and the pulpit entirely filled from the congregation during his absence.

At all times members of the congregation take part in the services in a way unknown among the Congregationalists, sometimes it may be to read the lesson, at others to lead in prayer. This participation is usually suggested and at the same time made more practicable by the use of a platform confronting the congregation, which forms the base of the pulpit, and on which are seats set apart for the deacons ; while their joint office with the pastor is further symbolized by the arrangement of the Communion table, at which the deacons seat themselves on his either hand, like the Apostles with the Lord in the centre, as so often depicted.

As with the Congregationalists, the pastors of the great Baptist churches enjoy a handsome stipend, and are freed from all financial cares. They give even

less time to the organizations for which the church is responsible ; but their preaching duties are heavier. The Congregationalists seldom have more than one week evening service ; the Baptists have two, at which an address may be expected—the Monday prayer meeting, and the Wednesday or Thursday service—and in some churches the Saturday prayer meeting of preparation for the Sabbath day is a great spiritual effort in which, though members of the congregation take prominent parts, they look to their pastor for leadership. Moreover, any other meetings that take place are probably more or less religious in character, so that they afford no relaxation from the pastoral attitude. Much time has to be given to study and preparation : ‘You must work hard to preach sermons,’ said one of their number.

Thus the Baptists make of their Tabernacles great centres of religious ministration, but the outside work undertaken is decentralized as much as possible ; and while Congregationalists desire to see their missions more independent than they are, the Baptists sometimes complain that those who undertake such work on their system become so completely independent as to be practically lost to the parent church ; the connection between mission and church consisting mainly of an annual collection in aid of its funds.

It will thus be seen that the ideals and practices of the Baptists differ greatly from those of the Congregationalists. This is brought out still more distinctly with the smaller churches of the ‘Open’ community, and most of all with those of the Exclusives of whatever description.

These little congregations hold together with much tenacity and self-devotion. The pastors can rarely trust to their stipend for a living. ‘There is no stated salary, we take what is left over, and that is not much,’ says one ; ‘if small we put up with’ it

and thank God ; if more, we rejoice.' 'The pastor pays rather than receives,' was said of one, and might, perhaps, be said of many. Most eke out an insufficient stipend by other earnings. One we have seen was employed, probably as a clerk, in the City ; another was connected with Building Societies, while a third had a business in boots, and kept his stock beneath the chapel. One and all are devoted to their cause, and each Bethel, Ebenezer, or Zion, has its small circle of supporters ; people of whom it was said by one of their own pastors that they were fifty years behind the times, and would like to think they were a hundred, but earnest God-fearing men and women to whom their religion is very real indeed, and who will come regularly even from long distances, unwilling to abandon their membership of the church to which they have become attached.

Although leading to division, such intensities of conviction result in strength, and whether taken individually or collectively the Baptist Churches are a great spiritual force in London ; and the religious influence they exert is very deep. As with the Congregationalists, it is no question of a little inner band ; it permeates the whole body. But compared with that of the Congregationalists it is far more intense.

§ 3

WESLEYAN METHODISTS

The Wesleyans complete the trio of great Nonconformist Churches, and play a part in the religious life of London fully equal to that of the Congregationalists or Baptists, but they differ from both even more than these do from each other.

Apart from certain shades or details as to belief, and some distinct peculiarities as to Church government, the Wesleyan body, as a whole, is marked by two very striking features of administration: the three years' system for the ministers, and the plan of circuits for the churches.

Wesleyan ministers are appointed by the Conference, and except under special conditions, can only hold an appointment for three years. They are then transferred to some other church, it may be to some quite different part of England. One man seen in South London, who had been sixteen years ago at Whitechapel, had meanwhile held ministries at Hull, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester and Kentish Town. The arrangement is intended to give freshness and vigour to the ministry. It also makes the wishes of the congregation of less importance in the selection of the man—a feature which is strengthened by the device of circuits in place of single churches as the unit of ministration. A circuit consists of several adjacently situated churches (very commonly it is three) which share the services of the ministers; of these there are nearly always a smaller number than there are churches, and two ministers for three churches is usual. The one who is leader is called the 'circuit superintendent.' These ministers have the assistance of a posse of 'local preachers,' who are volunteers with a gift for preaching, selected from the rank and file of the congregations, and

as some of these ultimately join the ministry, they form for it a kind of nursery. The 'circuit plan,' arranged for three or four months in advance, shows what services will be held and by whom conducted. The principal ministers usually devote themselves more particularly to one or other of the larger churches of the circuit, but never exclusively so. They all share in the whole work, and the routine is continually varied. It is a very elastic system, but it does not conduce to deep roots, and is not intended to do so, being distinctly connected with that policy of personal detachment which is sealed by the three years' limit of ministerial service.

The arrangement is certainly ill-suited to a great city like London, but the connection it provides between town and country is important, and the large proportion of provincially born members in their London churches is explained by the fact that the Wesleyan body is at bottom a country organization. The whole scheme savours strongly of the exigences of country life. We think of small village groups of people filled with a common religious spirit, bound together in Wesleyan society classes, making sacrifices to build themselves a chapel, receiving assistance from other similar groups, or giving help to others: prepared to conduct the service of God themselves, but recognising the need for an educated ministry. To provide this want they combine, and all the rest follows naturally. The system springs from the congregations, not the congregations from the system.

But in the great centres of population it becomes necessary to reverse this order. An opportunity in time and place is thought to exist for the formation of a congregation; funds are raised by a wide appeal, and a church is built which may be attached to an old circuit, or a new circuit may be formed. Well-known preachers assist at the inauguration of the church, and

Wesleyans are attracted to the opening services from all the neighbouring districts. Thus a start is given, but afterwards the church settles down to its work and its congregation has to be made. For this the persistent efforts of some one man are essential, and three years is too short a time. Or if, in three years, he has succeeded, it is heart-breaking to be torn from his flock and crushing to think that his departure may be followed by its dispersion. It is, indeed, astonishing that any man can work with a good heart under such conditions.

As regards mission work on a large scale, this difficulty has been fully recognised, and to render such work possible the system has been relaxed. This may, perhaps, prove to be the thin end of a wedge that will finally divide urban from rural in Wesleyan and other Methodist arrangements, or perhaps result in some different form of combination. One of our witnesses (a Wesleyan) held that it is only by working town and country in connection that missions in congested districts can accomplish anything. The object must be to help to 'scatter the people.' It may not be a practicable idea, but the Wesleyans would have the best chance of success in carrying it out.

The Wesleyan system provides all the machinery that is needed for a National Church. Partly on this account the Wesleyans approach more closely to the Establishment than do other Nonconformists. Some of their churches use a liturgy and adopt an order of morning service, differing but little from that used by the Church of England, nor is there any very marked divergence of accepted doctrine. In their buildings, too, they usually follow a style of modern gothic, similar to that commonly employed by the Church of England, the only difference being that they deliberately place the organ where the altar would stand, if there were one, and thus typify and emphasize

the everlasting breach of Protestantism with the doctrines of the Mass.

It is only the upper circles of Wesleyanism that affect a liturgy, and as lower classes are reached the order of architecture changes as well as the order of the services, till we reach the plainest type of meeting-house with portico and columns as its utmost decoration, and the simple Nonconformist type of service with hymns and extempore prayers, Bible exposition and sermon.

The congregations are drawn from the same classes that support the Baptists and Congregationalists, but it is a somewhat different temperament that is appealed to,—a character more filled with religious enthusiasm than are the Congregationalists, more emotional than the Baptists, and taking a more joyous view of life than either. Mere pleasure is not regarded either as wicked or as waste of time. Wesleyans may be as deeply religious as the Baptists and as hard working as the Congregationalists, but they look for, and they find, enjoyment in all they do. This spirit finds its vent especially in music, of which much use is made. In addition to organ and full choir of male and female voices, stringed instruments are often employed, and the deep gallery behind the pulpit is filled with the orchestra thus composed.

The Wesleyans have suffered more than either Congregationalists or Baptists from chapels deserted and stranded owing to the removal of their supporters. The lack of individuality among their chapels, owing to the circuit system and the constant change of ministers, necessarily weakens the tie to any particular church. Congregationalists, even if they move to a considerable distance, will cling to their church so long as a beloved pastor occupies the pulpit, and it is the same, or even more so, with the Baptists, to whom, beyond devotion to their leader, their church is

a Tabernacle or a Bethel, for the maintenance of which they are personally responsible. On the other hand, the Wesleyans profit more than the others from the flow of population into a new district ; partly because we then have the reverse of the same picture, and partly because, amongst new-comers in London, there is always some proportion of those of country parentage who have been born and bred in Wesleyanism.

Thus it came about that the new chapels filled, while the old ones fell empty. Of these many were sold. Except from a certain class, they had never obtained support, and that class had moved away from them. So long as the chapels were well filled the fact had not been so noticeable, but now the humiliating confession had to be made that the working classes and the poor were totally unmoved by the Gospel as it had been preached therein. The shame of this pressed heavily. The Church of England, entrenched in the parish system, could fall back on their patronage of the poor. The Congregationalists were eclectic and knew it; they did not hide it from themselves, but would say openly that it was impossible to make the same sermon serve for all classes. In a few cases a fresh start was made, upon democratic or 'brotherhood' lines, but, as a rule, the fact of an unsympathetic social order which they could not penetrate was quietly accepted. Through such changes of population the Baptists maintained their numbers best, and could always count among their supporters a proportion of working men. They did not pander to the poor. Poverty, in their eyes, was too often the result of sin or self-indulgence, deserving reprobation more than pity; moreover, they could look forward steadfastly through the present gloom to the accomplishment of the elect and the speedy coming of the Lord. They established missions to help the godly poor and preach the Gospel, and if,

in addition, they were instant to urge upon passers-by in the street, by hand bill and by word of mouth, the terrible fate of unrepentant sinners who refused the proffered salvation, their conscience was satisfied: they had done what they could. The numbers who would surely be damned were to them no unaccustomed horror. But to the emotional Wesleyan the situation was not to be borne, and the 'bitter cry' which resounded in his ears came to him as a trumpet blast, urging to fresh action in the name and in the spirit of Christ. The power of the Gospel (he claimed) was not exhausted. The Holy Ghost was with them. Salvation was for all.

In this spirit the three year rule was set aside, and the great movement of missionary enterprise in London was initiated which I have described, and which, beginning in the East End, has spread itself on all sides of London. But this remarkable attempt by no means exhausts the efforts made by the Wesleyan body to serve and evangelize the poor. In many circuits poor churches are linked to rich, in other cases separate mission centres are established, corresponding to those of the Baptists and Congregationalists, but stamped with the characteristics of Wesleyanism. It is said of them (not by themselves, but by others) that 'Wesleyans welcome the poor most in their chapels;' and the work among the poor is certainly taken up in a very eager and ardent spirit, usually by quite young people, but professionalized by the employment of 'Sisters of the People,' who wear a garb and give their whole time to the work. This organization will be further described, together with that of other sisterhoods, in another chapter. What I wish to point out now is, that this linking of poor with well-to-do leads (as does the parish system of the Church of England) to the development of an inner band whose fervour in this work is great.

As to the efficacy of their work, there may be various opinions. One minister will speak of it as being 'greatly blessed'; another can only claim that 'open-air services held by the mission bands are not played out, though they have been brought into contempt by being considered too much as ground for the novice to try his hand upon, and having nothing to recommend them except fervour, the preaching being hopeless drivel and the singing of the poorest;' while a third, taking the point of view which I am wishful to emphasize, says simply that 'open-air services are valued mostly for those who conduct them.'

The extent of the religious influence of Wesleyanism in London is more difficult to estimate than that of either Baptists or Congregationalists, because it is so much more varied in character. It can boast a great growth, which in the last thirty years has given London the lead over the North Country towns; and the vitality of the body is shown, not only in the institution of the great missions to re-occupy ground that had been lost, for which sake 'the circuits have been plundered,' but in the energy of the 'Wesleyan Church Building Society,' which has been bold in action and forward to open up new districts. In the policy adopted, architecture and prominence of position are greatly studied. There was a time when the feeling rather was to hide away their churches, but there has been a return to the 'aggressive spirit of their founders,' conspicuously illustrated by the recent purchase of a site in Westminster for their London centre. Money is always forthcoming. 'Wesleyans give liberally, being taught to pay,' signal proof of which has been given by the raising of the Twentieth Century Million Guineas Fund.

• But with all this energy, activity, enthusiasm, and zeal, there is something hollow, unsatisfactory, and unreal about Wesleyanism as a religious influence

which I find it difficult to put into words. I have said that the hard work and self-confidence of Congregationalists led to self-sufficiency, and the deep religious convictions of the Baptists to an obtrusiveness of piety which favoured cant; so the enthusiasm and overwrought emotions of the Wesleyans produce a false atmosphere of exaggerated language. Reports are set in a high key in order to get money. One who speaks very frankly says: 'We have to be very careful in accepting reports made by ladies, who allow their feelings to run away with them, and we try to eliminate the untruthful, but we do not tell the whole truth.' This economy of truth is practised by others also, and exaggeration in order to obtain money is carried far further by some of the undenominational missions; but in self-deception the Wesleyans have no equals, and this it is that seems to me to undermine the value of much of their work, whether among their own people or among the poor. Yet the scope of that work is great, and for perfection of organization it is unrivalled. Their religious system fails a little with the congregations in which respectability reaches the verge of fashion, and again at the lower end of the scale amongst the working classes and the poor; but with the whole range of its middle-class supporters it is powerfully efficient.

The churches are recruited from their own young people. Each class-leader looks after his own members, and "is expected to inform the minister of any in his class who are sick, or of any that walks disorderly and will not be reproofed." The members are publicly pledged "to live a Christian life, read the Scriptures daily, maintain the practice of private prayer, attend class and devotional meetings regularly, and take an active part in the work of the church if so desired." 'Wesleyans are trained talkers,' and the local preachers (who are not paid) preach as appointed.

They meet quarterly and must pass an examination, which includes questions as to conduct; while such an inquiry as 'do you know anything against the morals or doctrine of so and so?' will be asked at the local preachers' meetings. The ministers are examined similarly every year by the Conference, and 'require to be very careful how they walk,' in, for instance, affairs of the heart.

It is wonderful that the pressure of such a system can be borne, and it could not be without the exaltation of spirit, to the bad side of which I have referred, but which has its divine side also, as witness one of their minister's own account of his career. He was not brought up a Wesleyan, his mother had been a Churchwoman and his father a Congregationalist. He came on evil days; had walked the streets of London with half-a-crown in his pocket, and been 'caught in the stream and in the grip of the Devil, and only saved by the wonderful power of God.' To Wesleyans such experiences of the soul point the way of salvation, and are the true and only path of religion. Accordingly, they feel that, 'in place of the scholar, who is invisible six days of the week and incomprehensible the seventh, what Londoners need is red-hot simple preaching.' But signs are not wanting that in their mission work they, like the Salvation*Army, are being somewhat sobered. They have to learn that there is no universal solvent in the spiritual, any more than in the physical world, and it may be that they will be turned back to study more carefully the nature and limitations of the strange spiritual manifestations which they have been too ready to accept as indicating in a very special degree the divine presence.

* Thus while the religious influence of the Congregationalists turns largely on social and educational methods, and finds in full and healthy occupation*the

balance wheel of life ; and while the Baptists, filled with conviction of sin, cling to the anchorage of faith ; the Wesleyans trust to the heightening of emotion to lift them out of sin and raise their hearts to God.

Yet I am very conscious that such sharp lines of distinction cannot rightly be drawn without qualification. The picture I have given lacks light and shade. The characteristics of each are as has been stated, but these sects merge into each other through the variety of the individuals of which they are composed ; men become and remain this or that in religion from many other reasons besides those which are based on conviction or to be explained by character ; and, even among those who have undertaken the ministry (as with the clergy of the Church of England, though hardly to the same extent) there is to be found a wide range of disposition ; so that they include men who look at life in its relation to the seen and to the unseen from many points of view, hold their opinions with a very varying grasp, and may give to the same doctrines a quite different emphasis.

§ 4

PRIMITIVE AND OTHER METHODISTS

The chapels of the Primitive Methodists in London are usually quite small, but they are numerous, and widely distributed. Their members are very earnest Christians, and strongly attached. There is some interchange between them and the Salvation Army, but otherwise they rarely wander from their own religious body. Like the Wesleyans, they work on a circuit system, and being poor, have many more chapels than ministers. 'Local preachers' fill the gap, but the work of the ministers is hard, especially as regards visiting the members, who may be scattered far apart. They tell us that their churches are recruited in three ways (not indeed peculiar to this body): (1) by transfers, mostly from the country—these, it is added, are generally 'all right'; (2) by converts—brought out from the people living near; and (3) by those trained in the Sunday school and coming into communion through the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, these last giving the best workers.

Every chapel has its Sunday school, and the number of children coming under the influence of the denomination in this way is remarkable. The parents are rarely members, but there is no material difference in class, and no class feeling at all. There is no social gulf to bridge. 'The Primitive Methodists reach the working people; that is their glory,' says an onlooker. 'The Primitive Methodists are the only ones amongst us who touch the poor at all,' is the (perhaps hasty) verdict of a Congregationalist minister, but not very far from the truth; and other witnesses might be quoted to the same effect. It is probably the simplicity and directness of their beliefs and the democratic basis of management which attract. There is nothing sensa-

tional in their methods or imposing about the work they do. Apart from the Sunday schools, it is practically confined to the satisfaction of the religious needs of small groups of simple-minded people who were born Methodists; but some kindred souls can always be found to make good the loss the body suffers by lapse.

The schools are remarkable not only for practical uniformity of class between teachers and children, but from the fact that the teachers, or a large proportion of them, are adults, and that therefore their work is not to be regarded mainly in the light of training for the Christian Endeavour of young people, as with the other religious bodies is so often the case.

Beyond the satisfaction of the spiritual instincts of not a few and the exercise of a wholesome influence on the children, it is impossible to doubt that the sober and kindly lives of these good men and women must as always have some effect on those of their neighbours wherever they may live. As population moves, one chapel may be deserted and have to be closed, but elsewhere a new one is built, and so the work goes on.

But in some cases more has been attempted. Here and there, following in the footsteps of the Wesleyans, they 'have launched into the deep and let down their nets,' with no different results. There is a connection both in this instance and in that of the Wesleyans between these wider efforts and the worldly prosperity of members of these religious bodies. The Wesleyans have perhaps never been without wealthy supporters, but their surplus means have increased very much of late years. As they would put it, 'the Lord has prospered them wonderfully.' For the Primitives it is a new experience to have really wealthy members; or if any became rich, they probably became worldly at the same time, and were apt to join some other religious

body. Sometimes it is so still. But a higher ideal has been reached, and among the Primitives now, as has always been the case with the Society of Friends, an advance in worldly position may come without bringing with it any desire to leave the community. The men to whom this applies are greatly honoured, and are ready to do much for the cause. Their purses are ever open, and a mistaken estimate of what money can do results in the making of attempts which, if the money were not available, would never have been thought of. Only gradually do such efforts find their level among others, and only slowly do those responsible for them learn the limitations to which all are subject.

The United Methodist Free Church seems to lie midway between Primitives and Wesleyans. It is an honest, earnest body of lower middle-class people with a number of churches, one or two of which exercise considerable force. Like the others, this body adopts the circuit system, and on some of the circuits the ministers are greatly pressed, says one of these hard-worked men, with 'so many chapels to manage' and 'sermons to prepare for an exacting audience apt to be censorious.' There are also a few churches belonging to the Methodist New Connexion, but these seem to have little vitality.

The Bible Christians are another offshoot of the Methodists. They are for the most part countrymen, and clannish, and have several strong congregations filled with the conviction that 'they have got the message the world wants.' Their pastors are 'content with a bare living.'

There are several Welsh Methodist churches in London carrying on very active work among their own people who are by nature very religious and marvellously musical. The numbers of Welsh in London are great. As master-men, they are chiefly milksellers and drapers, and in addition to employees in

these trades (male and female), there are many Welsh girls in domestic service. Their chapel plays a great part in the lives of these people, especially as connected with their native tongue. English is the language of business and the shop, and, by necessity, of everyday existence, for there is no Welsh quarter in London, and there is, comparatively speaking, little of Welsh family life ; but Welsh is the language of their emotions, and the chapel and the meetings at and in connection with the chapel are almost the sole field for its exercise.

§ 5

PRESBYTERIANS, UNITARIANS, SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
AND OTHERS

None of the religious bodies included in this section make any claim to popularity. Their views are sometimes fanciful, but always thoughtful, and (with the exception of the Brethren, who are mentioned last) their principal interest to us will be found in the ways in which they themselves attack social problems and the light in which they regard the parallel action of others.

Among them the Presbyterians are by far the most important. They consist of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Scotch Presbyterians, or Church of Scotland. Their congregations are intelligent in a high degree and their ministers are men of culture and even great attainments. In both respects the level is certainly above that of most of the other Nonconformist Churches, and, I should say, above the average of the Church of England. They do not call themselves Nonconformists, and resent the name of Dissenters, and I have no wish to call them either, but it is their independent position that gives the great weight which I attach to their opinions.

The story of their own affairs is easily told. The churches are handsome stone structures, almost invariably of Gothic architecture, well finished within and without, and are kept in perfect order. Like the Established Churches, they are usually named after some saint. In some cases there are buildings for a Sunday school or for mission premises, but by no means always. The church is not regarded as a local institution; the congregations come from far and wide, and there is little call for the concentration of effort on the district in which they happen to meet for public worship. Should any of them feel impelled towards

collective missionary enterprise some other neighbourhood would probably be selected in which to try to 'do their duty by the poor.'

The congregations are maintained by the personality of the minister, and are subject to many lapses; but there is a constant supply of fresh material in the Scotch who come to London. They also obtain some Anglicans who are dissatisfied with Ritualism but who prefer the liturgy of the Presbyterians to the Congregationalist form of service; and finally they attract thoughtful people, those who 'demand an educated ministry.' The proportion of men, and especially of young men, in these congregations is unusually large, and they are such as will not put up with mere emotional appeals. For them arguments must be clearly stated to be acceptable. Thus the standard of preaching has to be high. To meet this requirement their ministers, who are regularly ordained, have the most thorough theological and philosophical training, and it comes about that 'while the Wesleyans draw the pious merchant and the Baptists those of lower middle and working class, the Presbyterians and to some extent the Congregationalists attract the most intelligent section of the middle class.'

Beyond such purely religious work little is attempted. There may be a literary society, but the ordinary social agencies are scarcely needed. Home life supplies everything wanted, except as regards 'young men from the country,' who are often received by the minister in the church or at the 'manse' after evening service on Sunday, that he may become acquainted with them and they with each other.

The cases in which these congregations have built a mission and undertaken social and religious work among the poor throw no new light on these subjects. They succeed in about the same degree and fail at the same points and in the same ways that

others fail. It is rather as intelligent onlookers that their evidence is of value to us. In so far as they are themselves a religious influence in London it is as an invigorating breeze from the North.

Unitarians, on the other hand, though impaired as religious critics by a certain narrowness of spiritual sympathy, are quite invaluable as leaders in social work. In the institution of 'Domestic Missions' they were pioneers. Their work in this field dates from an even earlier period than the foundation of the Ragged School Union, and of that the scope was at first much more limited. It was not possible for the Unitarians to kindle the burning enthusiasm which Lord Shaftesbury and those who have succeeded him, have roused amongst their agents, and also in the public mind, over the carrying of the Gospel to the poor while attempting to amend the conditions of their lives. The action of the Unitarians was limited on every side: in the securing of suitable workers, as well as in obtaining sufficient money, and most of all by the discovery, early made, that every step taken to make matters better, involved some danger of making them worse. It will, perhaps, be said that they lacked the 'one thing needful'—that which Mary had and Martha had not: on this Gospel theory great experiments have been made and are yet being made, but there are none of those engaged in such attempts that might not with advantage study the work done and the experience gained by the Unitarian organizations.

As a religious body the Unitarians are small in numbers, and their numbers are still dwindling. By the orthodox their teaching is regarded, somewhat arbitrarily, as a negation, and we hear it said that 'you cannot win on a negation;' but, however regarded, it does seem as though the Unitarian view of the spiritual world in its relation to man awoke little response in the

human soul, comparing in this respect unfavourably with even the most extravagant assertions of any African medicine man. Although, however, their direct corporate influence on religious thought grows less rather than greater, their doctrines may be detected working afresh elsewhere, especially among the advanced sections of the Congregationalists, and they probably hold a permanent place in religious development.

The Society of Friends is also a decreasing body, besides being less noticeable in the world than when their peculiarities of dress and speech were more strictly practised. In other ways, as well as dress, they have moved with the times, and in one case we find 'an old-fashioned Quaker meeting transformed into a militant Gospel mission.' Their great contribution to the religious life of the people has been the 'adult school,' which is in fact not a school at all, but a social and religious organization of the most democratic type. But no proselytizing is involved, this being foreign altogether to the habits of this sect. The Friends are content 'merely to welcome' such as join them. In this and in many other ways they set a wise example, and regarding one report from them my notes contain the remark that it is 'the simplest, truest' and least embellished account we have had of the work of any denomination.

And lastly, there are the 'Brethren' of both Open and Close orders, whose little places of worship are scattered throughout London and concentrated in the South-East. They may be known by the inscription to be found outside their buildings which marks the purpose: 'If the Lord will, the Gospel of the Grace of God is preached here every Lord's Day.' With the Close order, or Strict Brethren, no strangers whatever are admitted to the breaking of bread on Sunday

morning. The Open Brethren admit accredited Christians to this ordinance and encourage outsiders to attend the preaching of the Gospel on Sunday evening.

In these bodies there are, properly speaking, no leaders, but in practice it always happens that two or three come to the front and lead the service; often there is one on whom everything depends. It is difficult to judge the influence of this peculiar sect upon its own people, but it is undoubtedly strong. The number of adherents is not large, but shows no signs of decrease. There is no lack of vigour. Divisions in the body may have weakened its influence on the world outside, but such are the never-failing signs of vitality in all our religious sects, and it is mainly as evidence of the constant up-springing forces of primitive Christianity that the Brethren are of interest here, and there are various other small Christian sects of similar character.

Finally, it is unnecessary to do more than mention the Catholic Apostolic Church or that of the Swedenborgians, so little do they affect the present day. Their influence runs in deep spiritual channels out of sight, and awaits in vain any fresh bursting of the waters which originally carved these channels out. Nor need I here describe the work of the Positivists, whose universal philosophic Church of the future, too soon rent in twain, has looked in vain for any such outburst; nor that of the Agapemonites, whose minister is the latest of those who have in every age declared themselves to be the very Christ that is to come. And to the judgment of the future I must leave the high endeavour of the Ethical Churches as well as the 'New thought' of the Christian scientists. The former, while seeking to express the best moral teaching of every age, still fails to touch the imagination, while the strange realism of the latter, so far from making

material things spiritual, succeeds only in giving to spiritual things a materialistic flavour.

I have not thought it necessary to deal here with Judaism as a religious influence in London, since, except as setting an admirable example, especially as regards its virile character and close connection with family life, the Jewish religion concerns their own people only. We may seek to proselytize them, but in religion, as well as in race, they remain apart. Their lives and habits have been spoken of in their due place in preceding volumes, and their interesting religious customs were specially described in connection with East London.

§ 6

JOINT ACTION

The re-union of Christendom, the great dream of many Anglicans, finds a less ambitious echo in the 'Free Church' movement, which, while regarding complete union between certain bodies as possible, aims at combination for specific objects among 'orthodox' Nonconformists generally. But so strong are the forces acting in the direction of separation that in the country at large these aims are being realized hardly at all, the various denominations maintaining their separate organizations unaffected and unimpaired; and even in London, where the reality of a common cause is emphasized by many circumstances, and is thus more readily recognised, the impulse barely makes itself felt.

Not only do title-deeds, corporate funds, and all the executive machinery of the existing central organizations block the way, and fortify all the obstacles which are rooted in tradition; but the underlying differences of religious standpoint show no signs of

melting away. They are even given a sharper edge for those who care, by the weakness of those who do not; and fresh differences, if not new divisions, constantly occur.

The ideal of absolute union is probably unattainable, and its pursuit a mistaken policy. The sectional loyalty which leads to or results from separation, is a source of strength as well as a proof of zeal, and rivalry may take the wholesome form of emulation. Nor is sectional feeling, at any rate among the orthodox Nonconformists, incompatible with a degree of sympathy, which may become a very real force. There is no such barrier between Free Church and Free Church as there is between these, as a group, and the more extreme developments of Anglican Churchmanship or Roman Catholicism.

Manifestations of this sympathy in London are found in a common platform on occasions; as when a new minister is welcomed into a district, or for united prayer at some national crisis, or in connection with missionary enterprise, or it may be at meetings for the promotion of the claims of education, or to arouse public feeling on questions of temperance or morality. In such cases united action is not uncommon.

To give permanent form to joint effort is more difficult; but the attempt has been made by the establishment of local Free Church Councils affiliated to a central body. These have often very little vitality (though varying greatly in this respect), but their formation is a sign of mutual good will and of latent powers of associated action that might at any time assume importance. The primary object, the first task undertaken, was, unfortunately, one in which disappointment was certain, and it has been incurred. The plan adopted was that of dividing the district covered by the various Councils into areas, which were then allotted to some particular church, as its

‘parish.’ The duty of the church in charge of this area was to visit everyone and to urge on all non-church-goers the duty of attending some place of religious worship. The visitation was thus to be carried out, not in the interests of any particular denomination, but in that of all the combined chapels. With church-goers, of whatever denomination, they did not propose to interfere, but non-church-goers were, if possible, to be brought into some Evangelical Nonconformist chapel. Next to these the claims of the Evangelical Church of England would certainly be advocated, but the range of sympathy would stop short of High Church or of Roman Catholicism in the one direction or of Unitarianism in the other.

For once—for the making of a religious census inquiry from house to house—the system would serve satisfactorily, provided that this would justify the effort; but for the maintenance of any persistent religious influence the plan has proved quite valueless. Indeed, the only systematic work successfully undertaken has been that devoted to the visitation of workhouses, a task that has been shared by an old-established undenominational organization entitled the Christian Community, which has its headquarters in Bethnal Green. It is in the organization of special joint undertakings, rather than in the persistent carrying out of steady work, that these Free Church Councils have made themselves most felt, as, for example, in connection with local action in favour of temperance or against immoral practices (already mentioned), or recently, in the organization of a simultaneous Free Church mission to spread Evangelical truth. If it cannot be said that any great effect has been produced, either in checking drunkenness, or enforcing purity of life, or converting the masses, it is still much that combined efforts should have been made by so many different religious forces under one flag.

§ 7

OPINIONS EXPRESSED

The Nonconformist Churches, whatever features of exaltation, exclusiveness, or success one or another section may more particularly manifest, are, like the clergy of the Church of England, often much concerned at the extent of the failure which meets the efforts of themselves and of others to reach the great mass of the people, and a few opinions bearing upon this point, but culled from various denominations, may be quoted.

By some ministers what appears to them to be the main feature of the situation is stated in the simplest and most general terms, as by two Congregationalists, one of whom is found making the frank admission that 'the road to the religious feeling of the people has not yet been found;' the other expressing the same opinion by the remark: 'We are making no impression on outside indifference.' A Baptist, perhaps trying to get beneath the fact that he deplores, and to explain it, says that 'the people are very suspicious of religious approach,' while another member of the same denomination asserts roundly that 'none realize the pressing need of religious observance.'

In some cases the explanation of failure is deliberately attempted. Specific causes of fruitless effort are mentioned, and in this connection the deterrent influence of the London environment is, doubtless, uppermost in the minds of many, as in the case of a Wesleyan who finds that 'the settled London population is of all the most difficult to move.' 'In chapel work it is the young countryman who comes most to the front.' What is regarded as the temper of the times, rather than the tone of any particular place, seems to some to afford the most fundamental explanation of the prevailing indifferentism, as, for instance, to

a Congregationalist who thinks that the working classes have become more difficult to deal with owing to socialistic and free-thought propaganda. Although, however, it is widely and deeply regretted that such large masses of the people attend no place of worship, and that many might even be ashamed of themselves if they did so, it is often admitted that those who thus hold aloof may be most excellent, respectable, sober, and industrious people.

Some ministers look to the past, rather than to the present, for the chief explanation of the situation to-day, as in the case of another Congregationalist by whom the churches are believed to be suffering from their former anti-democratic spirit: 'Working men are prejudiced,' he says, 'thinking of the churches as they were, not as they are,' an opinion which, in as far as it is true, may point to the explanation of the 'suspicious' attitude complained of by the Baptist just quoted. A Wesleyan who, with characteristic boldness, 'does not, except as regards the very lowest, believe in the failure to reach the working classes,' avers that the working man has been driven away by the manner in which Christianity has been presented. 'He is not anti-Christian or anti-religious, but anti-humbbug. He appreciates goodness, but abominates cant.' There has been, continues this outspoken witness, 'too much of "Come to Jesus," and maudlin hymns.' And then he reaches the same conclusion as many others. 'It is necessary for churches to take a broader and more social view of responsibility, and to have more sympathy with material and social wants.' The Christianity of Christ, he points out, was largely concerned with human wants, thirty-four miracles out of thirty-nine having been connected with them.

With regard also to those who attach themselves to religious organizations, many interesting remarks are made. One Congregationalist speaks of the

‘dreadful self-complacency of middle-class people ;’ and a Baptist says they fall so easily into cant that when he visits he drops religion. Another Congregationalist tells us with regard to ‘the full—too full—report of their work,’ that they like to ‘see themselves in print ;’ and we hear from a third that the monthly ‘question service’ is the most popular. This service (which is a common device to excite interest and secure popularity, and which has been referred to in the preceding volumes) consists in the answering by the minister of any question submitted to him for that purpose, in writing, during the previous week. Some of these may be honest questions demanding and receiving elucidation ; but too often they are put only to show the cleverness of the inquirer, and the response becomes simply an exercise in adroitness.

A third Congregationalist, speaking of ‘great united missions,’ and such work generally, admitted that they are frequented, as a rule, entirely by church-goers, and added that those who go into the ‘inquiry room’ are found to be almost exclusively young people from neighbouring churches, who in this way take the final step of ‘definitely coming out.’ A Bible Christian minister says plainly that such missions do more harm than good. ‘They do not reach the class aimed at, and are, for the religious, a spiritual debauch.’ And a Presbyterian, speaking of ‘sensational’ methods generally, remarks : ‘There is a spiritual as well as spirituous dram drinking,’ and then varies the metaphor by saying ‘you can raise the thermometer by putting your finger on the bulb.’

The extent to which all the Churches draw on the same limited sources is shown by such remarks as ‘Methodism flourishes best where there are High Churches ;’ or (from the opposite point of view), ‘The Evangelical character of the surrounding Churches of the Establishment, weakens Noncon-

formity ;' but is shown more definitely by a common experience, mentioned by a Congregationalist who had himself tried a 'P. S. A.' service very successfully but had abandoned it on finding that all who attended it came from other churches ; or again as in a district which the Wesleyans had attacked with much vigour, where the vicar of one of the parishes complained that they had 'taken a good many from him of the fringe that sit loosely.' 'In London the best man wins, irrespective of dogma,' sums up the situation, and comes from a Wesleyan who has reason to be fairly well satisfied with his own success.

CHAPTER IV

• ILLUSTRATIONS (NONCONFORMISTS)

(SELECTED FROM PRINTED MATTER)

§ 1

CONGREGATIONALISTS

I. THE CHURCH AND THE PASTORATE

(a) THE following is a fair specimen of the Constitution of a Congregationalist Church :—

This Church is Congregational and Independent, recognising no superior ecclesiastical authority on earth, and acknowledging allegiance to Christ as the only Head and Lord. On this very ground it rejoices in the bonds of a true unity and spiritual fellowship with all who love the Saviour. It elects its own office-bearers, determines its own mode of worship and action, and regards the Word of God as the only statute book of the Christian Kingdom.

Membership.—The Church welcomes to its Fellowship all true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Persons are admitted to Communion on credible profession of “repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” as testified to the Church, after interviews with them by the pastor: and by letter of transference from other Christian Churches.—(*From a Chapel Manual.*)

• (b) The succeeding extract states the position taken up by these churches in a more argumentative manner, but to the same effect :—

The Church of Christ is the whole multitude of the

redeemed, whether in heaven or on earth. The Church on earth includes everyone who is a believer in Jesus Christ, and who is thus united to Him as the living Head. Any company of believers striving faithfully to fulfil the law of Christ, associating for mutual help and for the observance of the ordinances of the Gospel, is a "Church." Congregational or Independent Churches maintain the principle of self-government and deny to the secular power the right to impose a creed or to make laws for the Church of Christ. Everyone who voluntarily becomes connected with the Church, and who thus openly avows belief in Jesus Christ, should do so with intelligence and deep sincerity. There must be earnest determination to live according to the will of Christ, accompanied by the humble hope that He has led the soul from darkness to light.

And leads up to the statement that—

All persons are eligible for Church membership who give evidence of their conversion to God.

Concluding with the following practical appeal :—

It is earnestly hoped that all persons who become members of the Church will feel it incumbent upon them to engage in some Christian work; but should they be precluded from active service it is hoped they will contribute to the funds of the various societies connected with the Church as the Lord has prospered them.—
(*From a Chapel Manual.*)

(c) These extracts sufficiently indicate the principles and practices of the Congregationalist Churcher. It is very usual for these and many other Nonconformist Churches to choose a motto for each year. The following are quoted from the same Chapel Manual. All are texts from scripture :—

CHURCH MOTTOES.

1886 "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh."

1887 "I will go in the strength of the Lord God."

1888 "In the name of our God we will set up our banners."

1889 "The Lord of Hosts is with us."

- 1890 "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."
 1891 "For Christ's sake."
 1892 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."
 1893 "I am ready."
 1894 "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."
 1895 "Behold, God Himself is with us for our Captain."
 1896 "The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."
 1897 "The Lord shall guide thee continually."
 1898 "God is able."
 1899 "The Lord is thy confidence."
 1900 "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

CHILDREN'S MOTTO TEXTS.

- 1896 "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother."
 1897 "Shew piety at home."
 1898 "Serve God . . . with a willing mind."
 1899 "Please God."
 1900 "Ever follow that which is good."

(d) The uses to which these mottoes may be put are exemplified in the following example of a Pastoral Letter :—

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—“If God be for us, who can be against us?” This is the greeting with which we would inspire each other for 1900. We have to live with this realization in our lives, “God with us.” During the past year some of our members have gone to be with God. Death only changes our life in this respect, it transposes these three words. Here we say “God with us;” there we shall rejoice in “We with God.”

The past year has not been without its encouragements. The first flush of success may have died away, only to reveal the more abiding nature of our work for Christ. Let us remember that our only real increase can be through the growth of spiritual life in our midst, and every member of the Church ought to contribute to this. “God for us” means that we must show ourselves worthy of His companionship. As a Church, living; as

a people, holy ; as individuals, righteous ; as servants of Christ, loving and obedient ; as Christians, Christ-like. Let us ever keep in mind, not only the demands we make upon God, but also the claims He has upon us, and in faithfulness of spirit do our utmost to meet them.

I would lovingly ask you to realize all through the year the strength of our Motto :—" If God be for us, who can be against us ? "

And to the children I would say :—" Ever follow that which is good."

I wish for you all a bright and prosperous, happy New Year.

Your sincere friend and Pastor,

—(*From a Report.*)

* * * * *

(e) The following letter from the deacons of a chapel, the pastorate being vacant, and the statement as to Church membership, are notable as indicating the strength of discipline in these churches :—

To the Members of the Church and Congregation.

DEAR FRIENDS,—It is our duty once again to address you in the absence of a pastor, and we do so with the consciousness that the Church has been much blessed during the year 1899.

The past year has been fraught with grave anxiety and serious responsibility, and we desire very gratefully to acknowledge the kindly sympathy and ready co-operation which has been manifested by all members of the Church and congregation.

Public worship has been maintained with heartiness and in a devout and reverent spirit. It has been very gratifying to see the large congregations that have filled the chapel Sunday by Sunday, and this has been specially encouraging on the occasions when the name of the preacher for the day could not be expected to be widely known.

We desire to call the attention of the members of the Church and congregation to the fact that the attendance at the weekly prayer meetings has for some time been very small, and to press upon them very earnestly how important it is to the spiritual welfare of the Church that these meetings should not be neglected.

We rejoice that the renovation fund, concerning which we had some anxiety at the beginning of the year, has, by assistance from the pew subscription fund, been made ample for its purposes, and that consequently we need make no further appeal under this head.

We also think it a matter for congratulation that there has been so ready a response on the part of the Church and congregation to the Twentieth Century Fund of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. As the contributions to this fund extend until August, 1901, it is not too late for any who have not contributed hitherto to add their names to the list and, if possible, to the Historic Roll. We should like to think that every member of the Church and congregation had some part in raising this fund.

Six members have passed away during the year, and we can think of them as having entered into "the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

All departments of the Church work seem to be living and active, and the interest displayed by the large proportion of young people among us fills us with hope for the future of the Church.

We remain,

Dear Friends,

Yours in the service of our one Lord and Master,
Jesus Christ,

January, 1900.

* * * * *

(f) Church Membership Regulations.

• The reduction in membership is much larger than usual, owing to removals, irregularities of attendance, and other causes, but the prospect of the election of a new pastor has necessitated a rigid scrutiny and revision of the Church Roll. The result of this revision is shown below:—

Names on Church Roll, December, 1898 541

Admissions to the Church during 1899—

By Profession 18

By Transfer 4

— 22

563

Losses during 1899—

By Death 5

By Transfer 19

Membership lapsed 45

— 69

Total Membership, December, 1899 494

Church members are supplied with Communion tickets, to be placed in the box when the collection is made at the Lord's table. By means of these tickets a register is kept of members' attendances. Should the ticket have been lost or mislaid, members are requested kindly to substitute their card, or a slip of paper with the name written thereon.

The deacons will take it as a great kindness if members of the Church and congregation will inform them when there is illness in their homes.

Members of the Church leaving the neighbourhood are urged to make early application for a letter of transfer to a sister Church, in order that their membership may not lapse.

At a Church meeting on November 13th, 1876, the following Resolution was adopted with reference to absence from the Lord's table:—"That, in case of the prolonged absence of any member from the Lord's table, without assigned cause, one of the officers of the church shall kindly remind the member of the importance of regularity in the observance of the Ordinance of Christ; and, should absence without cause continue for six months after such reminder, such member shall be considered as withdrawing from the fellowship of the Church."

Church meetings for the admission of members are usually held on the Thursday before the first Sunday in the month.

Special Church meetings for business are held according to announcement.

—(*From a Year Book.*)

(g) The importance attached to the pastorate and its 'call' are reflected in the following address:—

The year 189— was an eventful one to you and to me. You—guided and prompted, as you believed, by Divine influence—invited me to become your pastor. It was an important step for you to take. A solemn responsibility. No finite mind could tell with any certainty what would be the result—to yourselves, to your families, to the neighbourhood, to the cause of God—if I accepted the position. It was important to me. Should I be doing rightly or otherwise? To accept your call I must resign the sphere in which I was labouring; I must break many tender ties, cause sorrow to loving hearts, leave dear children and children's children behind. And then the undertaking was not a light one: your numbers were greatly diminished, and there was much uphill work to do.

I accepted your call. I came. You gave me a warm reception and a hearty welcome. And—without boasting but with humble and adoring gratitude to God, and thanks to you for loving, sympathetic appreciation of my ministry and hearty co-operation—I think we may

say the results, so far, confirm the conviction that it was God's good pleasure that I should undertake the responsible and arduous, yet loved, work of the pastorate of this Church.

The greatly increased congregation; the goodly number of additions to the Church; the frequent testimonies from one and another that God gives my preaching acceptance and makes it helpful, and the general spirit of love, joy and peace that prevails—these things surely warrant us in saying “God hath done” and is doing “great things for us, whereof we are glad.”

(h) Or to take another instance, quoted from a chapel magazine :—

The event of the month will be, I presume, the *anniversary of the pastorate*. . . . It is hard to realize that I have already been here a year. In that time how much has God wrought? I have not known a happier year in all my ministry. Nor have I ever faced my work with greater confidence and hope in the power of the Gospel of Christ. The love and loyalty of the people makes work easy, so that the dawn of the future is bright with glorious possibilities.

(i) The personal note is also sounded unflinchingly, though with less egotism, in the following notes on pastoral visitation, taken from a Year Book :—

The pastor endeavours to visit the families associated with the Church as often as other calls on his time and energy permit. Especially does he wish to visit those who are ill, or bereaved, or in any trouble. May he throw out these few hints as a help to making this part of his work more effective?

1. *Let him be received into the heart of the family whenever he calls.* It is not his desire to be treated as a stranger, but as an intimate friend, and he likes best to be taken into the room where the family is at the time assembled. It matters not if things are not quite tidy, nor how many little ones are about. His purpose is to get to know his people in their family life, and to win their confidence and love.

2. *All cases of sickness or trouble should be at once*

reported, either directly or through the mediation of some friend. It should always be taken for granted that when the minister does not call in time of trouble *it is because he does not know of it*. Absence from the services is not always noticed by him, nor is it always due to this cause. There are few things that try a minister's patience more than to be credited with negligence in the performance of this sacred duty when the negligence is really on the other side. He hopes that this may be a word in season, to be treasured up and acted upon as occasion arises.

3. The pastor may be seen in his vestry at the close of any of the public services, or at the parsonage during the week. If friends visit him in the mornings, let them, *as far as possible*, avoid Fridays and Saturdays, which are sacred to the preparation for the Sunday services. In case of trouble he is, of course, accessible at all times. Mrs. * * * * * is "at home" to the ladies of the congregation on the second Friday afternoon in every month; and on the evening of the same day the pastor is "at home" to all, and would especially invite such as find it difficult to get to know him through the ordinary channels, owing to the exigencies of their occupation and necessary absence from home when he makes pastoral calls on their families. He would also like to see the young people on these occasions.

(j) The pastoral duty of spiritual conversation is referred to more briefly in the following extract from a chapel magazine :—

The pastor is at home to receive callers for spiritual conversation and with reference to Church membership on Thursday evenings from 6 to 7.30 o'clock and is always glad to see persons after any service concerning their spiritual welfare.

Persons in sickness or trouble, and desiring a pastoral visit, are earnestly requested to send word to the pastor direct. A postcard only costs a halfpenny, and is sure to reach its destination.

(k) Or again, but with less enthusiasm for the task, in the following note :—

I am always ready to call on the sick and troubled in the Church if friends will only kindly let me know that they desire it. My duties are manifold, but it is one of my most valued privileges to comfort and help God's own. Please give me this opportunity by calling at the vestry or sending me a postcard.

2. APPEALS AND PRECEPTS

(a) *To Whom it may Concern. By the Pastor.*

It is no part of my duty in this brief word of introduction to epitomize the contents of the Year Book, neither is it my intention to moralize upon them. They tell their own tale plainly enough, and every reader can draw his own moral. Paramount in its importance above all details of organization is the necessity that each member of our Church should make clear to himself, and constantly *keep* clear, the *ideal* of membership. It is one thing to work *on* an idea, quite another thing to work *in* it, to be inspired and possessed by it. Many work on the idea of membership who do not appear to be *possessed* and thrilled by the thought that they are "Members of the Body of Christ." Vincent de Paul said of a religious mason whom he knew, that he worshipped God with every stroke of his hammer, and Hugh Miller said that his old master, also a mason, put conscience into the laying of every stone. That is what we all need, more *conscience* in church life. Intellect and emotion are good, but conscience is the salt that keeps life sweet and fresh.

Do you put conscience into your attendance at public worship? Some plead draughts, others heat, others complain that we are too crowded. Are these the reasons of conscience, or the false pretences of whim and indifference? I simply ask. I make no charges.

Do we put conscience into our contributions? This is a delicate question. It does not become us to judge one another. All the more, therefore, let each one ask himself, lest he be found lying to the Holy Ghost.

Do you put conscience into each act of worship, the prayers, the reading, the listening, the praise? Many do

not seem to sing at all; is that statuesque silence capable of justification at the bar of conscience?

Then as to the social side of our membership. Are we as kind, as courteous, as friendly and pleasant to all fellow members as we can be? Do we give diligence—all diligence, as St. Paul has it, “to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace”? I am not making any charges. I merely put the question. Let each man, each woman, supply the answer. In no case will that answer be wholly favourable. There is no man that sinneth not. God forgive us the iniquity of our holy things and give us grace to do better in *all* respects in the time that yet remains, so that we, too, may worship God with every stroke of the hammer, putting our conscience into every stone that we lay in the walls of the temple of our God.—(*From a Report.*)

(b) *Public Worship.*

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

You are earnestly requested to be regular and punctual in attendance. All seats unoccupied five minutes after the hour for commencing the services are free. Could you not determine, in addition to attending Sunday services, to keep the Wednesday evening free from social engagements and sacred to the service of God? Surely those who are in earnest in seeking the conversion of their children, and of those around them, will not need urging to join in prayer for blessing on the preaching of the Word, on the work of schools, Bible-classes, missions, and other agencies of the Church. A great promise or enlargement made to God's people is followed by these words: “For this moreover will I be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.”—(*Manual.*)

(c) *Practical Precepts.*

1. Remember that you do not come to the sanctuary as *hearers*, much less as *spectators*, but as *worshippers*. There is danger in these days of subordinating every part of public worship to the *sermon*. Come, not only hungering for the *Word*, but thirsting for *God*, for the living God. “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”

2. Be courteous to strangers; show them the attractiveness of piety and the natural kindness of the Christian.

Oblige them with seats and books, and lose no opportunity of encouraging the timid and inquiring. Let none who worship with us have to say "No man cares for my soul."

3. If possible, be seated before the time for commencing the service, and attend twice every Sunday.

4. Do not let wet or cold weather, which would not prevent you from going to a concert or evening party, prevent you from occupying your usual place in the sanctuary.

5. Bear your own fair proportion of the Church's burden. If you have the power to contribute, accept no privileges at the expense of another. "Bring an offering and come before Him."

6. Each member of the Church ought to be doing something for Christ, and render personal aid as far as possible in all the agencies of the Church.

(d) What I would earnestly plead for is a closer drawing together of all who love and serve Christ for the common good. It ought not to be the case that the real burthen of the Church falls on the comparatively few. Take for example our missions The work has grown greatly and its expenses naturally increase, but the number of subscribers dwindles. There are many who give what is of far greater value than money: they give themselves, their time, their strength, their service. But a far greater number give neither one nor the other, except in casual gifts when special appeals are made from the pulpit. It is not too much to say that what is now a heavy and almost crushing burthen on the few, would be no burthen at all if it were better shared.—(*Report.*)

(e) The obligation of Christian service lies on every member, and in many ways the opportunity is provided. The young have to be taught, the poor cared for, the weak to be supported, the sick to be visited, and the lonely to be cheered.

(f) We should adopt the same alertness and business-like despatch in doing the work of God as we are accustomed to display in the many concerns of our daily life.

(g) Some of you have heard God's voice, asking for the

dedication of your love and gifts to His service: Why have you not responded? We have been watching for you; we long to receive you into His fellowship. Some of you have grown cold in His love, callous in His service. Why? When has He forgotten you or ceased to care for you?

(h) I like the motto I heard the other day—"Live your life as though Christ died yesterday, had risen this morning, and were coming to-morrow."

3. PRETENSIONS, AND SELF-CRITICISM

(a) On Sunday evenings during this winter, the key-note of my ministry has been "Back to Christ." I have sought to give you the mind of Christ Himself on the great verities of the Christian faith and of the Christian life. We have considered such subjects as "God the Father," "Christ the Son," "The Kingdom of Heaven," "Eternal Life," and others of kindred character and importance. I have found unusual interest in the study of these great themes, and unusual pleasure in preaching on them, and am not without evidence that the interest and the pleasure have been shared by you. I have a deep conviction that it is the duty of the pulpit if it would be a power for good in this age as it has been in other ages, to treat of such great soul-inspiring themes as these, and not to pander to a common craving for sensational treatment of topics of only a passing and superficial interest. If I have given you the mind of Christ on these great subjects, I have never lost sight of the supreme place of the Cross in the economy of salvation.—(*Church Manual.*)

(b) I entered upon the work in entire dependence upon a God who is rich in promise and performance; nor has my trust been in vain. . . . There are many evidences that God is in the work. I am assured by some who have been attending the mission for several years that there is a decided advance in the spiritual tone of the people. For all signs of God's presence in power I am deeply grateful; to Him be all the glory. . . . At

both missions the future is bright with hope.—(*From a Missionary's Report.*)

(c) A glance at our progress during the year resolves itself mainly into a reflection that as much has been given to us so much will be required of us.

We have had peace and progress, and a sense of increasing brotherhood. I am not sure that we can say so much about that indefinable, but very real factor in success in Church life, which is called for want of a better name "spiritual atmosphere." We certainly lack the devotional spirit. The Sunday morning prayer meeting is languishing; our week-night services are not so well attended (by a long way) as they ought to be. Deducting those who are hard at work in some department of Church life on Sunday and week-days, there are numbers of our members who never attend any of the devotional gatherings. This has recently been a real trouble to me. How can we hope and expect for the highest prosperity unless we are prepared to join in earnest and united prayer for the Divine blessing on our work, and bathe our souls in the bracing atmosphere of devotion? I hope and pray that this year will mark a decided change for the better in this direction. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world"—and, I fear, many a Church—"dreams of." Even God cannot bless us if we neglect to wait upon Him. I am certain that this neglect of public devotion is a serious blot on our present condition, and that till we repent and mend our ways we shall fail in the highest fruits of the Spirit.—(*Church Year Book.*)

4. SPECIAL EFFORTS

(a) *A Cyclists' Gospel Band.*

Last spring an organized effort was made to carry the Gospel to the villages and small towns round London by means of the cycle. Twenty-five members joined this band. Largely attended meetings were held at Romford, Waltham Abbey, Hoddesden and Epping, and many other places were also visited. Tracts and notices were distributed from door to door. At 7 o'clock the meetings, in some carefully selected open-air spot, were commenced.

The cycles were stacked, the banner raised, and the members stood round and proclaimed the Gospel and sang hymns, the villagers quietly listening to the Word of Life. God wonderfully owned and blessed this work in the salvation of many, both children and adults, and as an outcome, week's Missions have been held this winter at Romford and Hackney.—(*From a Year Book.*)

(b) *A Watchers' Band.*

I want to draw the thought of our Church again to the Watchers' Band, and to ask all who realize that Christ claims the whole world as His Kingdom if they will join it. As His disciples, we cannot limit our work and prayers to the needs of those alone whom we see around us. . . . There are over twenty-seven thousand Watchers now all over the world, and in our own Church we number two hundred and twenty-six. . . . Should we not *all* enter into this agreement of prayer? If all our members were Watchers what a power would be working in the world for Christ through our missionaries! And what a blessing would come back upon our own Church.

Our missionaries, one and all, rejoice in the Watchers' Band. Dr. * * * * *, of North China, writes:—"Fellow workers at home, if you only knew how much we value your prayers in China, if you could see the effect this movement has out yonder in rousing new life in the Church, you would surely join in it. We believe in prayer, God make us mighty pleaders for others." The Rev. * * * * *, of Madagascar, writes:—"In all our labours this is our constant feeling—Somebody is praying for us. The Lamp in the Temple is always burning. . . . The path of prayer is the way to ultimate victory."—(*From Magazine of Congregational Church.*)

(c) *A Christian Instruction and Benevolent Society.*

The prime object of the Society is to bring the Gospel to the homes of those who never enter the House of God, and this is done by means of tracts and by heart to heart conversation, and by practical Christ-like sympathy with distress in whatever form it is found. The work of the nurse, Mrs. * * * * *, is invaluable to this end A way has been thus prepared for the coming of Christ

into dark souls. Testimonials, touching and tender, are received both from her and the visitors generally that Christ is seeing of the travail of His Soul and is being satisfied in Bethnal Green. In addition to monetary help, when needed, the following have been distributed:—Coals, 320 hundredweight, 1089 new and left-off garments, 325 pairs of boots, 154 letters for various hospitals, &c., &c.

There is an enormous field for labour available for those who desire in this way to testify as to the sincerity of their love for Jesus Christ. May God the Holy Spirit move mightily upon more hearts to render *personal* service, for this is the Society's greatest need.—(*From a Year Book.*)

(d) *A Benevolent Society* (instituted 1793)—Rule 4. "That sick persons be esteemed the principal objects of the Society's benevolence."

Many have been visited in their sickness and poverty, and the help rendered to them has been most gratefully received, and has been the means of reviving and strengthening their health and sustaining their faith in the Fatherhood of God; more contributions to this deserving fund are needed: eighty-nine meat tickets and fifty-four bread tickets have been given, and £4. 12s 6d during the year. All suitable cases reported to the treasurer receive attention. Half of each subscription (if above 10s) is retained as meat and bread tickets for distribution.—(*From a Year Book.*)

(e) * * * * * Church is strong in socials
 It was a pleasure to see so many new friends, who have come along us recently, meet so heartily the overtures of the old to make them happy. It was a healthy atmosphere to live in, and will help us all to know God better, because we know each other better. The spiritual and the social are not far apart in Jesus Christ.—(*From a Church Magazine.*)

(f) The event in the history of our Church during the past year that stands out clearly above all other matters is the bazaar An elegant temporary room was erected on the eastern side of the church and brilliantly illuminated by electricity. This room, with the vestry and hall, gave sufficient accommodation for all the varied

attractions determined upon Many entertainments were provided The result was a net balance of £250, and a valuable surplus of goods remained.—(*From a Year Book.*)

5. ORGANIZATION

(a) *Specimen Lists of the Chief Office Bearers.*

(1.) * * * * * Congregational Church.

PASTOR—* * * * *

DEACONS * * * * * (six).

TREASURER OF INCIDENTAL FUND—* * * * *.

CHURCH SECRETARY—* * * * *.

AUDITORS * * * * * (two).

DELEGATES TO CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES
* * * * * (four).

DELEGATES TO COUNTY UNION * * * * * (seven).

DELEGATES TO LONDON CONGREGATIONAL UNION * * * * * (twelve).

(2.) * * * * * Congregational Church.

PASTOR—* * * * *

DEACONS * * * * * (ten).

CHURCH SECRETARY—* * * * *.

CUSTODIANS OF THE ROOMS * * * * * (two).

ORGANIST AND CHOIR MASTER * * * * *.

CHAPEL KEEPER * * * * *.

TRUSTEES * * * * * (ten).

(b) *Specimen Lists of Services.*

(1.)—Religious Services, Meetings, &c.

Sunday Services—Morning at 11; Evening at 6.45. A prayer meeting is held occasionally at the close of the evening service.

Communion—On the first Sunday morning in each month, except February, April, June, August, October, December, when the service is in the evening.

Baptism—The second Sunday in each month, after the morning service.

Week-Day Services—Monday: prayer meeting, 7.30 p.m. Thursday: service, 7.30 p.m.; choir practice, 8.30 p.m.

Sunday School—Morning at 9.45; children's service at 11; afternoon at 2.45.

Young People's Institute—Sunday afternoon at 3.

Band of Hope—Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour—Tuesday at 8 p.m.

Literary Society—Wednesday, 7.45 p.m., from October to April.

Wren Debating Society—Saturday at 7.30 p.m.

Ladies' Working Societies—Dorcas Society, second Tuesday in each month, at 3.30 p.m. Ladies' Society, fourth Tuesday in each month. Young Women's Association, fourth Thursday in each month at 8.30 p.m.

[In the following example, in addition to the church, there are three mission centres]:—

(2.) i.—Services (Parent Church).

Sunday—Public Worship at 11 and 6.30. It is very desirable that every Seat-holder should be present in the church a few minutes before the commencement of Divine Worship. Children's services in the Lecture Hall at 11 and 6.30. Sunday school, and classes for young

people at 10 a.m., and 2.45 p.m.; Prayer meeting at 9.45 a.m. open to all. Communion service the first Sunday in each month after morning service, and the third Sunday in each month after evening service. Baptismal and Dedication services, as announced.

Monday—Literary Society: every Monday evening in the winter months, at 8.15, for young people and others of either sex, over 16 years of age; all (especially young men and maidens) are invited to become members of this Society; a separate programme of the lectures, essays, &c., is issued. Mothers' meeting, in Bible-class room of the church, at 2.45 p.m.

Tuesday—Dorcas Society meets monthly, on the second Tuesday in each month at 3.30; tea at 5. Christian Aid Society, every fortnight, at 8 p.m. Camera Club, every first and third Tuesday at 8 p.m.

Wednesday—Ladies' Bible-class, monthly, on the Wednesday preceding the first Sunday in each month, at 4 p.m. Bible-class Working Society, following the Bible-class; tea at 4.45. Junior Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour at 6 p.m. *Week-Night Service*, every Wednesday evening at 7.30, except the Wednesday preceding the first Sunday in the month, when the Church meeting is held.

Thursday—Band of Hope at 7 p.m., for one hour; open to all. The object of this Society is to teach young people to abstain from intoxicating drinks as beverages, and to sustain them in this; the meetings are well supported by efficient helpers, and close promptly at 8 o'clock. Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour at 8.15 p.m.

Friday—Choir practice, 8 p.m.

Saturday—Prayer meeting, 7.30 p.m.

Applications for Sittings should be made to the Pew Superintendents.

ii.— * * * * * Sunday School.

(* * * * * Board School.)

Sunday—Sunday school, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Bible-classes for young men and women, 3 p.m.

Tuesday (8 p.m. at * * * * * Hall)—"The Young People's League," open to all scholars over 14 as members; subscription 6d per term; friends of scholars may be elected members.

Wednesday (7.30 p.m. at * * * * * Hall)—Meetings for social intercourse, games, reading, &c., open to girls only over 14 years of age, attending the school.

Saturday (from 5 p.m. at * * * * * Hall)—Meetings for social intercourse, games, reading, &c., open to youths over 14 years of age attending the school.

iii.— * * * * * Mission Church.

Sunday—Prayer meeting at 10.30 a.m. Services, morning at 11 a.m., evening at 6.30 p.m. Children's special service at 11 a.m. Sunday school and Bible-class for men and women at 3 p.m. Young people's Bible-class at 3.15 p.m. Communion service on second Sunday evening in each month. Baptismal services as announced by the Pastor.

Monday—Mothers' meeting at 2.45 p.m. Gospel Temperance Society at 8 p.m.

Tuesday—Children's Savings' Bank, 5.30 to 6. Band of Hope at 7 p.m.

Thursday—Service, 7.30 p.m. Church choir practice, 8.30 p.m.

(Except on March 1st, May 31st, August 30th, and November 29th, when the Quarterly Church Meeting is held at 8 o'clock.)

Saturday—Men's slate club at 7.30 p.m.

Applications for the use of the hall or adjoining rooms should be made to Mr. * * * * *

Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, 3 o'clock, at * * * * * Hall.

iv.—* * * * * Hall.

Sunday—"The * * * * * " Sunday School.—Children's morning service at 10.45; afternoon school and Bible-classes at 2.45. Pleasant Sunday evening service at 7. Communion first Sunday in the month (evening).

Monday—Mothers' meeting, at 2.30. Band of Hope, 7. Slate club, 8.

Tuesday—Pleasant Tuesday evening at 8.

Wednesday—Choral class at 7.

Thursday—Cottage meeting at 3. Women's Bible-class at 7.30.

Saturday—Choir practice for Sunday service at 6.30.

Applications for the use of the hall should be made to Mr. * * * * *

(c) *An order of Service, &c.*

Morning—Hymn; Scripture; Chant; Collection for London City Mission; Anthem; Prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer, Congregation join; Hymn; Sermon; Hymn; Benediction; Communion Hymns (3).

Evening—Invocation; Hymn; Scripture; Chant; Collection; Anthem; Prayer; Hymn; Sermon; Hymn; Benediction.

NOTICES.

Sunday—10.15, Prayer Meeting; 3.0, Young Men's Bible-class; 3.15, Men's Own, the Pastor; 11.0 and at 6.30, Services, the Pastor. Morning Communion.

Monday—7.30, Church Meeting.

Tuesday—7.0, Meeting of the London Congregational Union, City Temple.

Wednesday—7.30, Service; 8.45, Y.P.S.C.E.

Thursday—11.30, Ladies' Prayer Meeting; 8.15, Y.P.S.C.E.

Friday—Good Friday. 11.0, Service at Holloway.

Saturday—3.15, Cycle run to Smallford from Horns., Gate; 7.0, Prayer Meeting.

Next Sunday—3.15, Men's Own; 11.0, Service; 6.30, Service.

Collection last Sunday, £23. 19s 7d.—(From a card circulated in the Chapel.)

(d) *A Mission Programme.*

LIST OF MEETINGS.

Sunday—9 a.m., Men's adult school; 11 a.m., Sunday school service; 3 p.m., Sunday school and Bible-classes; 3 p.m., Women's adult school; 3.30 p.m., Open-air service (summer months); 7 p.m., Service.

Monday—11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants; 2.30 p.m., Mothers' meeting; 7.30 p.m., Boys', girls' and men's clubs; 8 p.m., Girls' brigade; 8.30 p.m., Library.

Tuesday—10.20 a.m., Ladies' prayer meeting; last Tuesday in the month, 11 a.m., Work-room; 11 a.m., Visitors' meeting; 3 p.m., Women's sick benefit and sharing-out society; the first Tuesday in the month, Mothers' union; 4 p.m., Library; 6.15 to 7.30 p.m., Band of Hope; 7 p.m., Men's club; 7.30 p.m., Boys' club; 8 p.m., Gymnasium, Girls' club; 8 p.m., Girls' brigade; 8.30 p.m., Miss * * * * *'s class.

Wednesday—11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants; 2.45 p.m., Women's adult school; 7 p.m., Sunday school Bible-class; 7.30 p.m., Boys', girls' and men's club; 7.30 p.m., Men's gymnasium; 8 p.m., Girls' brigade; 8 p.m., Total abstinence society.

Thursday—7.30 p.m., Boys', girls' and men's clubs; 7.30 p.m., Boys' brigade, gymnasium and drill; 8 p.m., Wood carving (men); 8 p.m., Girls' brigade; 8.30 p.m., Men's chess club.

Friday—11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants; 3 p.m., Class for ex-members of the girls' club; 7 to 8 p.m., Girls' gymnasium and drill; 7.30 p.m., Evening classes for men; 7.30 p.m., Boys', girls' and men's clubs; 8 p.m., Girls' brigade; 8 p.m., Boys' brigade; 9 p.m., Ambulance class.

Saturday—7.30 p.m., Boys', girls' and men's clubs; 8 p.m. Concert (in winter months); 8.30 to 10 p.m., Men's sick benefit and sharing-out club; 8.30 to 9.30 p.m., Savings bank; 8.30 p.m., Men's debating society.

—(*From the Manual of the Chapel of a wealthy suburb.*)

6. SUBSIDIARY SOCIETIES.

(a) A Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour.

PRESIDENT—Rev. * * * * *.

VICE-PRESIDENT—Mr. * * * * *.

TREASURER—Mr. * * * * *.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY—Miss * * * * *.

BIBLE CLASS ROOM SECTION—Mr. * * * * *, Supt.; Mr. * * * * *, Sec.; Misses * * * * * (four); Messrs. * * * * * (three).

NEW ROOM SECTION—Mr. * * * * *, Supt.; Mr. * * * * *, Sec.; Misses * * * * * (five); Mr. * * * * *.

(The united executive consists of the above, together with the superintendent, secretary and treasurer of the junior society.)

The completion of another year of active and loving service by our en-lavourers is a source of gratitude and thankfulness to God for His guiding spirit in our midst, and a cause for increasing hopefulness in the coming days. The members have worked harmoniously in service for the Master, and in working have gained fresh strength and help in the divine life. The presence of God has been manifest amongst us, and with thankful hearts we look upwards and onwards, knowing that we are helping forward the kingdom of God, and praying that we may ever stand firm to our pledge which we have taken, and that we may be ready and willing to do whatever our Master would have us do. The weekly meetings have been well attended the whole of the year, the average being about seventy-eight each week.

Owing to the membership having become so large, it has been decided that the society should be divided into two sections. This took place at the beginning of July, each section having its own committees, excepting the Home Missionary and Junior committees, which are jointly formed from each section. The meetings are held simultaneously, in the Bible class-room and new room respectively, the same subject being also taken in each room as far as possible.

This of course has given a greater scope for work in our different

committees, and allows the individual member a much better opportunity of fulfilling his or her pledge than was possible before. The Look-Out and Prayer Meeting committees have been doing good work, and would like to thank all the many friends who have so ably and willingly helped by speaking at their meetings.

The Foreign Missionary and Temperance committees have also done great service in their different spheres of work, and in connection with the Missionary committee two missionary addresses have been given during the year, one by Miss W * * * * * (of Ningpo, China), the other by Miss T * * * * * (of Berhampur.) These addresses have roused our members to greater zeal in the missionary cause. On November 7th a sale of work was held in the lecture hall on behalf of the London Missionary Society, and we are glad to report that a sum of £38. 1s was forwarded to the mission house as a contribution towards the funds of the society. We have also had the pleasure this year of forming a Sunshine committee, by which the homes of the poor and sad are brightened by visitation, gifts of flowers, clothing, &c., and other acts of kindness. It might be mentioned that last December a box of toys and clothing was sent to the toy and clothing service, and now the special work is visiting crippled children in * * * * *. The Social committee have during the year arranged and carried out four social meetings and two outings during the summer to * * * * * Hills and * * * * * Park, * * * * *.

Most of our members are doing active work at the lodging-houses or the children's separate service in the lecture hall every Sunday evening, not to speak of the Sunday school, for which they have furnished five new teachers during the past year. Nine of our numbers have joined the Church, and six associates have become active members.

Our fifth anniversary as a society, and the third of the Junior Endeavour, was held on November 9th, in the lecture hall, when we had a very pleasant and profitable gathering, under the presidency of our pastor. The Rev. * * * * *, Secretary of the British National Christian Endeavour Council, gave us a helpful and stirring address, and Miss * * * * * of * * * * * spoke particularly to the juniors.

We have had to accept with very much regret the resignation of Miss * * * * * as treasurer, and her kind services in this capacity during the past five years have been much appreciated.

We have received during the year twenty-three new active, nine associate, and five honorary members, but have lost seventeen active by transfer or withdrawal.

The present membership is as follows:—

Active members	...	...	...	97
Associate	...	...	...	13
Honorary	...	...	...	33
				<hr/>
				143

In concluding, we give a warm invitation to any young people to either of our meetings, which are held every Thursday evening at 8.15 for one hour, and we can assure them that they will receive a hearty welcome.

(b) Junior Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour.

PRESIDENT—Rev. * * * * *.

SUPERINTENDENT—Mrs. * * * * *.

TREASURER—Miss * * * * *.

VISITOR—Miss * * * * *.

SECRETARY—Miss * * * * *.

•The past year has been one of progress and great help. We have fifty-

five active and twelve trial members, making a total of sixty-seven. One has been transferred to the senior branch, and we have lost two or three by removal.

The Missionary committee have been trading in various ways, and succeeded in raising 10s, which has been handed in to the London Missionary Society.

The juniors also had a share in the sale of work held in the lecture hall last November, their small stall realizing the sum of £4.

The Sunshine committee sent a parcel of toys, scrap-books, &c., to our toy service.

Miss * * * * * having left the neighbourhood, her position as visitor has been taken by Miss * * * * *.

As many of the elder members are going in for various examinations, and are therefore unable to be so regular, we should gladly welcome some younger children to fill their places at the meetings.

—(*From a Chapel Year Book.*)

(c) A Literary Society.

PRESIDENT—Rev. * * * * *.

VICE-PRESIDENT—Mr. * * * * *.

TREASURER—Mr. * * * * *.

SECRETARY—Mr. * * * * *.

FINANCE SECRETARY—Mr. * * * * *.

LIBRARIAN—Mr. * * * * *.

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN—Mr. * * * * *.

COMMITTEE—The Deacons—Dr. * * * * *, Messrs * * * * * (eight), Miss * * * * *.

At the annual meeting of this Society, held on Monday, September 26th, 1898, Mr. * * * * * was elected Secretary in place of Mr. * * * * *, resigned.

The year 1898-9 has been one of continued and increasing success. The character of the Society's proceedings has been maintained, and the roll of its membership has increased. The syllabus attached evidences the one, and the balance-sheet attests the other.

● AUTUMN SESSION, 1898.

- Oct. 3 Christian Socialism.
- Oct. 10 Prize Elocutionary Competition.
- Oct. 17 Why are we Protestants?
- Oct. 24 Punch, or the London Charivari.
- Oct. 31 Food Reform.
- Nov. 1 The Songs and Sorrows of the Negro Race.
- Nov. 7 What the School Board does for the Children
- Nov. 14 Licensing Reform.
- Nov. 21 The Necessity of Dangerous Trades.
- Nov. 28 Nineteenth Century Ideals.
- Nov. 29 Parliamentary Election.
- Dec. 5 An Evening with Tennyson.
- Dec. 12 Vivisection.
- Dec. 19 Members' Soirée.

● SPRING SESSION, 1899.

- Jan. 9 Notes of an American Holiday.
- Jan. 16 Charles Dickens, an estimate and a tribute.

- Jan.* 23 The Reform of London Government.
 „ 30 Charlotte Brontë, her Life and Works.
Feb. 6 Facts concerning Darkest England.
 13 The L. C. C. and Popular Amusements.
 20 The London Water Problem.
 „ 24 Elocutionary Recital.
 „ 27 Educational Ideas.
Mar. 6 The Phonograph.
 „ 13 The Rights of Women, the Wrongs of Men, according to Law.
 „ 20 A Night wi' Burns.
 „ 27 Garden City; an Ideal City made practicable.
 „ 28 Annual Public Soirée. Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts of Book-Making.

—(*From a Chapel Year Book.*)

(d) **A Mutual Improvement Society.**

PROGRAMME.

- Oct.* 1 Conversazione.
 „ 8 Lecture—"Home Rule: or Fireside Politics"
 „ 15 Debate—"Which has the greater influence on character?
 Books or Companions?"
 „ 22 Holiday Papers (one prize value 5s for best paper—time limit five minutes).
 „ 29 Musical and Elocutionary Evening.
Nov. 5 Competition Evening.
 „ 12 Lecture—"My visit to Monte Carlo."
 „ 19 Mock Trial—Action for Slander.
 „ 26 **Scotch Concert.***
Dec. 3 Lecture—"A Humorous Side of the Law."
 „ 10 Christmas Party.
 „ 17 Lecture—"Something about Light."
 „ 24 } Christmas Vacation—no meeting.
 „ 31 }
Jan. 7 Soirée.
 „ 14 Lecture*—"Pleasant days in Italian Cities." Illustrated by
 Limelight Views.
 „ 21 Discussion—"Ought a Christian to be a Politician?"
 „ 28 Recital—"Glimpses of Drumtochty," or Selections from Ian
 Maclaren (with Dr Watson's kind permission)
Feb. 4 Concert by the combined Mildmay Park and Dalston Wesleyan
 Orchestral Society.
 „ 11 Hobby horses—by their riders
 „ 18 Lecture—"Billy Bray, Cornish Miner and Christian Worker."
 „ 25 **Irish Concert.***
Mar. 4 Lecture—"John Bull and Co."
 „ 11 Debate—"Which has contributed most to the World? Music,
 Art, or Literature?"
 „ 18 Musical and Elocutionary Evening.
 „ 25 **Lecture.***
Apr. 1 Soirée and Election of Officers.

* A charge to members for admission will be made.

(e) A Literary Society's Lawn Tennis Club.

PRESIDENT—Rev. * * * * *

VICE-PRESIDENT—Mr. * * * * *

TREASURER—Mr. * * * * *

CAPTAIN—Mr. * * * * *

HON. SECRETARY—Mr. * * * * *

COMMITTEE—Mrs. * * * * *, Misses (two), Messrs. (eight).

Last season was, without exception, the most successful on record, both as regards the play and socially, owing, no doubt, to a great extent to the glorious summer. Six matches were played with neighbouring clubs with very good results: winning four and making the other two very close games.

The Club Tournaments (Ladies' and Gentlemen's Singles) were won by Miss N. C. * * * * * and Mr. H. C. * * * * *. In both instances the matches were well contested to the end.

The finances of the club are very satisfactory. The season was commenced with a deficit of £8. 19s 4d, but after paying for the ground being put in repair for the coming season there was a debit balance of about £1.

The sociability of the club depends a great deal upon teas, and the ladies cannot be too heartily thanked for their kind efforts. Mrs. H. C. * * * * * and the Misses T. * * * * * and B. * * * * * worked really hard in making five o'clock on Saturday afternoons a most enjoyable time.

The season was brought to a pleasant close with an alfresco concert, the ground being very prettily decorated. Thanks are due to those members who so kindly helped to make the evening a success.

—(*From a Congregational Church Year Book.*)

(f) A Camera Club.

PRESIDENT—* * * * *

VICE-PRESIDENTS—* * * * * (six).

COMMITTEE—Messrs. * * * * * (six).

HON. LANTERNIST—* * * * *

HON. FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND TREASURER—* * * * *

HON. SEC.—* * * * *

HON. ASSISTANT SECRETARY—* * * * *

The Camera Club has continued during the year with a fair attendance of its members. Several summer outings have been held, the most successful being one to Eynesford, under the leadership of Mr. H. B. L. * * * * *, who offered as a special prize one of his celebrated pictures, a framed carbon enlargement of the late Lord Leighton's "Arab Hall," for the best six photographs taken on this occasion, which did not, however, receive the response it deserved.

The Committee are indebted to * * * * *, for an excellent lecture, also to * * * * *, for a lantern lecture on "Egypt," when he exhibited a large number of slides illustrating the architecture and antiquities of that country from negatives taken by himself during his residence there.

The Committee regret that there is not the same enthusiasm shown by the members as in the earlier history of the club, many paying their subscriptions without attending its meetings. Many members have expressed a desire that the meetings should be of a more social character than is now permitted, and it is feared some will discontinue their membership if this is not provided for.

The Treasurer reports that all expenses have been paid, and a satisfactory balance remains in his hands.

—(*From a Chapel Year Book.*)

7. THE FELLOWSHIP

I close this series of extracts with the following "Solemn Covenant" used at a church which, though not nominally Congregationalist, is so in all essentials alike of government and doctrine :—

*The Christian's Solemn Covenant and Bond of Union.
Renewed and publicly ratified at Church by the communicants of the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday morning of every year.*

On this first Sabbath of the New Year, and assembled round the table of our Lord, we do hereby, before God and one another, renew our solemn Covenant.

We confess that we are sinners, deserving the righteous punishment of God; but confiding in His mercy, revealed by Jesus Christ, who is "the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." By Him, the only way to the Father, we draw near, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." We would live as His adopted children, trusting, obeying, rejoicing in Him. We yield ourselves to the Son of God. We would be taught by Him as our Prophet; we rely on His sacrifice as our Priest; we would obey His commands as our King. For this we seek the aid of the Holy Spirit, the Giver and Preserver of the life of godliness in the soul; and we declare our sincere purpose to give heed to His counsels—not wilfully to grieve Him—but daily, through the year, to cherish His presence in our hearts.

Being not our own, but bought with a price, we present ourselves—spirit, soul, and body—time, property, influence—a living sacrifice unto God. We will endeavour in private and public, in our households, in our business, in daily life, in all places, in all companies, to act as becometh the Gospel—to promote true religion in the hearts of others, to help the needy, comfort the sorrowful, and to diminish vice, ungodliness, and misery in the

world, "looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ." And knowing our own weakness, we implore the help of Him who has said, "My grace is sufficient for you."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to this our solemn Covenant we do severally and unitedly assent—with a solemn and a hearty—Amen.

§ 2

BAPTISTS

1. CONSTITUTION

(a) * * * * * Baptist Church.

FORMED JANUARY 1ST, 189 .

At the first Church Meeting, held on Tuesday evening, January 3rd, it was unanimously resolved that the following should be the Church Covenant, the Constitution of the Church, and the Rules of the Church.

I. THE CHURCH COVENANT.

We do solemnly enter into Covenant, and pledge ourselves to the Lord, and to one another in Him, for the establishment and maintenance of a Baptist Church, and for fellowship in the worship and service of God.

We recognise in the Holy Scriptures the only rule of faith and practice, and are determined, the Lord being our Helper, to do all that is in our power for the advancement of "the Truth," and the progress of "the Church of God."

We also confess the obligation which rests upon us to love as brethren, to bear one another's burdens, and to contribute, both by prayer and gifts, to the support of the ministry of the Word, which we believe to be of Divine appointment.

We moreover heartily subscribe to the following great Evangelical doctrines:—

(1) Of man's total ruin in "the Fall," and the consequent corruption of our whole nature.

(2) That salvation is to be traced to the free and sovereign grace of God alone—that God gave His only begotten Son to become our "Substitute" and "Sin-Beater"—that the Lord Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and put them away by the Sacrifice of Himself.

(3) That we have Redemption only through His Blood, who is "the Lamb of God, slain from before the foundation of the world."

(4) That all men being born in sin, and being accounted by God as dead therein: must, 'ere they can see the kingdom of God, be "born again"; and that this Regeneration is the work of God the Holy Spirit through faith in the Atoning Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(5) That the Scriptures teach that all who believe on the Lord Jesus, who is one with the Father and the Spirit, are made partakers of eternal life now, and of eternal glory at His appearing. And also, that the Scriptures further teach, that all who are unbelieving and disobedient shall go away into everlasting punishment.

2. CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

We also heartily agree that the Constitution of the Church shall be as follows :—

(1) That the membership of the Church shall be open to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and accept Him as their Saviour and Lord, and whose lives are in accordance with this profession.

(2) That the offices of Parson and Deacon (and of Elder and Deacons should such be appointed) shall be filled only by persons who have been baptized by immersion upon a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the officers shall be elected at a Church Meeting specially called for the purpose.

3. RULES OF THE CHURCH.

(1) That Church Meetings shall be held for the transaction of business, and for Christian fellowship, as often as the officers may think necessary.

(2) That all matters, without any exception, discussed at any Church Meeting shall be regarded by the members as strictly private, and that, as a matter of honour, no member shall be free to speak of such matters to any one not a member of the Church.

(3) That all candidates proposed for membership shall be seen by the Pastor and by two brethren, or sisters, who shall be appointed by the members assembled at the time the proposals are made.

(4) That no proposition shall be brought before the Church by any member without an intimation of the same being given in writing beforehand to the Pastor and Deacons. Also that notice of any such proposition shall be given at the previous Church Meeting.

(5) That any case of inconsistency, and the like, shall be as early as possible inquired into by the officers, and dealt with by them, or, if they think necessary, referred to the Church to be dealt with according to the method, and in the spirit, indicated by the Apostles in the rules laid down by them in the New Testament for the right government of a Christian Church.

(6) That all members shall be free to attend all Church Meetings, but no members shall be entitled to vote at any *Special* Church Meeting until he or she shall have reached the age of twenty years.

(7) That any member who is absent from the Lord's Table for six months together, without giving a sufficient reason, shall be considered as not desiring to remain in membership.

(8) That any member who is ill shall be expected to send word to the Pastor and Deacons that such member may be visited.

(9) That every person shall cease to hold office in the Church—whether Pastor, or Deacon (or any other position)—if required to vacate such office by a Special Resolution of the Church passed by a two-thirds majority of the members, at a meeting specially called for the purpose, after such notice as the Church may think fit to give. The Resolution to be communicated to the person, on behalf of the Church, by the Secretary for the time being.

(10) That the above rules may be revised at any Special Church Meeting (after a month's notice has been given) should the necessity for revision exist.

(11) That a copy of the Covenant, and of the Constitution, and of these Rules be given to every person who joins the Church.

*(b) Office Bearers.** * * * * **Street Chapel.**

PASTOR—Rev. * * * * *

DEACONS * * * * * (nine); ELDERS * * * * * (fifteen).

Times of Services—Sunday morning, 11 o'clock; Sunday evening, 6 30;
Monday evening, 8 o'clock (Prayer Meeting); Thursday evening,
8 o'clock.

The Church Meeting is held after the Prayer Meeting on the Monday following the third Sunday in the month.

Sunday Schools—* * * * * Street, Sunday afternoon, 2.45;
* * * * * Place, Sunday afternoon, 2.45.

Communion Services are held on the first Sunday in the month, after evening service; third Sunday in the month, after morning service.

PEW STEWARDS * * * * * (five).

DELEGATES TO THE LONDON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION * * * * * (three).

DELEGATES TO THE DISSENTING DEPUTIES * * * * * (two).

DELEGATES TO THE BAPTIST UNION * * * * * (three).

DELEGATES TO THE SOCIETY FOR THE LIBERATION OF RELIGION FROM
STATE PATRONAGE AND CONTROL * * * * * (seven).

—(*From a Church Manual.*)*(c) Church Finances.*

I. *The Weekly Offering*.—Pew rents, weekly offerings and quarterly collections are relied upon in many places for the support of the ministry, and for all the incidental expenses in connection with the place of worship. We rely on one thing alone for all these ends. We trust to the free will offerings of the worshippers. . . . Every contributor to the weekly offering should see that his gifts are—(1) in proportion to his income as God has prospered him; (2) Not of constraint, but willingly, for “God loveth a cheerful giver”; (3) It is very desirable that the offerings should be made weekly. “Bring an offering and come into His courts.” A receipt will be given quarterly.

II. *Sittings*.—Although we have no pew rents we allot sittings in the usual way. State your wants to the seat steward, and tell him how much you hope to give per week, and he will find you a seat and furnish you with envelopes for your weekly offering. Our rules respecting sittings are—

(1) That no seat can be reserved after the first hymn has been sung.

(2) That any sitting may be given to another when the holder of it has not contributed to the weekly offering for three months.

III. *Visitors*.—All strangers will be welcomed and shown to seats by the seat stewards. They may express their sympathy with us by placing an offering in one of the boxes near the door.—(*Annual Report of a Baptist Church.*)

2. PASTORAL LETTERS

(a) MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—Another year of service for Christ is completed. Its opportunities are all gone and its record for ever closed. We have no business to pass any judgment upon it, that is the sole prerogative of Him Whose eyes are “as a flame of fire” and Whose feet are like unto “burnished brass.” He still walketh amid His Churches, and His judgment is exact and final. But while we dare not judge our work we may well be filled with gratitude to Him Who has permitted us to represent His cause another year, and has supported us in His service so royally. The various reports which follow this address, both statistical and financial, are eloquent proof of His goodness to Whom be praise everlasting.

But if we must not judge we must watch. We are to watch not only for our Master’s appearing, but over our own walk and work.

The need for this will appear greater when we think of the temper of the age in which we live. That temper is not one of active hostility to our faith. It wavers between patronage and indifference. But either attitude is far more dangerous to us than pronounced hostility. Both create an atmosphere which is most injurious to vigorous Christian life. Both eat the heart out of earnestness, regard zeal as fanaticism, enthusiasm as vulgar, and lull the conscience to sleep in a pleasant but false security.

Over against these subtle influences let us place the apostle’s words which exhort us to “stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.” Steadfast and united striving, that is the Church’s duty. *We must strive against prevailing indifference to the majesty of God’s character and claims.* “No one is afraid of God now, Berry,” said Dr. Dale to his friend shortly before his death. We must strive to recover the lost fear of God. The absence of this sense of awe and reverence accounts for much of the worldliness and irreligion round us. It was an apostle who said, “Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord we persuade men.” This is a fear which is both the foundation and the fruit

of love. *As the result of losing this proper fear there is a lack of wondering gratitude at the marvellous grace revealed in the Gospel.* We must strive for this heart-moving sense of God's grace, the absence of which produces such a lack of warmth, heartiness, and glow in service and in song.

• *Following in natural order to the loss of awe and gratitude comes a growing disregard of God's day and God's house.* We hear of "the slowly sinking wreck of the English Sunday," and, much as we would wish to believe the opposite, we fear that this is only too true a description. Last year, indeed, witnessed the defeat of an attempt to issue "seven-day newspapers," but while we may well be encouraged by the success of the opposition, the tendency to make the day one of amusement still goes on. Legislation is of little use to stem the tide of self-indulgence. The only remedy is the cultivation of a more earnest spirit among professing Christians. We must strive more ourselves to observe the day as set apart for religious purposes and not for selfish ease, and to secure a wiser discipline in Christian homes, where, in too many cases, a foolish laxity is allowed which is as cruel to the children as the old extreme of over rigour.

"Steadfastly striving," this is the duty of the hour. We live in momentous times. The future is big with possibility of good as well as of evil. In the world there is a half-fearful anticipation of coming events. Among many in the Church there is an expectation of startling developments in the progress of the Kingdom. But whether this year has surprising changes for us, as individuals, or a people, or no, one thing is clear, the same faith must be contended for as of old, the same service still persisted in, the same lessons of faith and love practised, and the same Lord trusted and obeyed. May we be faithful to our trust.

I am, yours to serve for Christ's sake,

* * * * *

(b) MY DEAR FRIENDS,—The year 1899 leaves us overwhelmed with astonishment at the goodness of the Lord, and our hearts are deeply moved by the evidence of His presence and the power of prayer. The year began with dark clouds and stormy trials, but all the way through

help from God was forthcoming and sufficient for all our needs.

Notwithstanding the withdrawal of many from our fellowship, we have had the joy of receiving one hundred and two new members, which is the highest number in any one year in the history of the Church. Surely this is the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes. Let us, in reviewing the past, take courage for the future, and advance with courage and hopefulness, believing that God, high over all, reigns in power, establishing His Church.

As a people we have heavy responsibilities resting upon us, but what is their weight if God dwells within us. We fear no foe, we shrink from no burden, we cannot fail if God be with us. He in the fiery pillar dwells, by His power water shall spring from the barren rocks, and manna shall be scattered by the way.

Our care is not for the favour of man or for the glamour of gold, but for the presence of God and the power of the Holy Ghost. Our mission is not to cater for popular favour or cringe to the worldly tastes of unspiritual men; but to fulfil the Divine commission "Preach the Gospel," "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," our only concern being that it may be recorded of us, as of the disciples of old, "The Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." For these signs we watch and labour, knowing that such will be sure evidence of the Lord's working.

The presence and help of the Lord may be gained or hindered by the spirit of the Church collectively and each member individually. Holiness, love, prayerfulness, and self-sacrifice, will enable us to "flow together to the goodness of the Lord," whilst pride, selfishness, worldliness and unfaithfulness, will bring barrenness and spiritual death.

Let us seek that the love of Christ Jesus our Lord manifest in the atoning sacrifice of Calvary may be shed abroad in our hearts with increasing power, until it permeates our entire being, and affects our every word and deed, shedding forth that fragrant influence which is well pleasing to our God.

The year 1900 promises well. Great work is to be done,

great power is to be given, great victory is coming. Let us draw nearer to God, close our ranks in loving unity, advance in the great campaign, knowing that we are set apart by God to do a work that is immortal, eternal, glorious, which demands our utmost strength, our liberal offerings, and our loving loyalty. The issue is certain, the reward is sure, and ours shall be the delight all through the way, that we have shared with Christ the blessed work of saving souls.

Praying for you all joy and peace,

I am, your affectionate Pastor,

* * * * *

3. WORDS OF WARNING

(a) Looking abroad I see much to cause sorrow and holy fear. I know I am counted a Pessimist by many in this matter and a prophet of evil. Better, however, be a true prophet of evil than a false one of peace. If there be no danger an alarm note will do no great harm, but if there be, silence may be fatal and certainly criminal. The "down grade" tendency in the Churches, deplored and denounced by dear Spurgeon, not only continues, but gains accelerated speed. The Word of God is being undermined by those who are supposed to have no other work to do than to proclaim it. Satan's note of interrogation is being placed after nearly every book of the Bible. "Hath God said?" is fast taking the place of "Thus saith the Lord." The need of conversion is but little emphasized, and evolution is superseding regeneration. The growing worldliness of the Churches is beyond all question, and the theatre has its advocates in the pulpits. As a result of these things revivals are seldom heard of. Stagnation seems the order of the day. The old-fashioned doctrines of the Bible did rouse men and give birth to mighty movements, but "modern thought" theories leave the world untouched or only tickled. A mutilated Bible is no two-edged sword. With this sad growth of infidelity on the one hand, I see on the other a marvellous increase of Romanism. The Protestant spirit of England has

fallen into a deep sleep. On every hand the activity of Rome is to be beheld. Convents are multiplying, Sisters of Mercy swarm, priests are edging their way in everywhere, children are being swept wholesale into Catholic schools, and no one seems to trouble about it. Indeed, it seems the fashionable thing to show special politeness to Rome's cardinals. Added to this, the spirit of Rome is practically ruling thousands of professedly Protestant Churches. The only difference between the two is that one is honest and the other dishonest. How long will Englishmen, I wonder, put up with the Mass, the confessional, prayers for the dead, and all the mummeries of Rome now shamefully carried on in her Protestant Church. Between infidel rationalism, on the one hand, and Popish superstition on the other, the true Church of God is hard pressed just now. There is need to pray "O Lord revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." Amid all these things the hope of my heart is the speedy personal return of the Lord Jesus. Nothing but the coming of the King can put things right.—(*An East End Pastor on leaving his pastorate.*)

(b) "Ye must be born again" (John iii. 3-7).

In our day there is plenty of religious profession. In spite of the profession, there is abundant evidence that the majority, and even the majority of religious professors, are not saved. This is very serious: to be unsaved, means that you are lost. There is all the difference in the world between merely being religious and being *born from above* before you can even begin to serve God you have to be *born anew*. Reformation is not what you need; more careful attention to religious duties is not what you need. Life is what you need. There is eternal life for you in Christ and in no other. —(*From a Chapel leaflet.*)

(c) *That's me! three facts.*

All have sinned (Rom. iii. 23). That's me!

Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. v. 6). That's me!

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved (Acts xvi. 31). Can you add, That's me?—(*From a Chapel leaflet.*)

(d) *Extract from a Memorial Sermon preached in 189— from the text “READY” (Matt. xxv. 10).*

Oh, man and woman, I pray you, in the name of my God, to-night, that you will face this matter and picture your own death-bed if you are not right with God. Methinks I can see you as you say to your wife, “Go and get that brother from * * * * *; ask him to come and see me. I am afraid after all I have made a mistake in not being ready.” The friends gather round your bed, and the doctor comes in, and you look at him and say, “Doctor, how am I? Am I looking better?” and the doctor looks at you and shakes his head; you have but a very few hours to live. “But, doctor, I am not ready. I won’t die. I am not ready. I must live; I am not ready to meet God.” But that relentless power that you have defied takes you shrieking to the edge of that abyss, and you shriek “I will not die.” You fall into the darkness of an unprepared Eternity! Oh, man, get ready! Time is flying, men are dying, hell is filling, Christ is coming, and you are unsaved—unready. May God make you ready. Our brother was ready when the call came—but a death-bed and not ready! Have you thought of it? Meet Christ whose blood you have trampled under your feet; meet God whom you have defied and ignored, and not ready; meet Him at the Judgment Bar of God, and no preparation—an eternity without God, without hope, with the lost, unsaved, when you might have been saved and ready to-night, and God knows that ere this night closes you might stand before God. They that were *Ready* went in, and the door was shut. The ready shut in, the unready shut out. On which side of the door would you be?

4. AIMS

(a) Who can tell the effect upon the Church, upon the world, if every member in his secret life before God were more intent upon overcoming sin, more frequent in prayer, more diligent in the study of God’s word, more simple and unaffected in confession, more strong in faith,

more fervent in love. . . . No man can answer for his brother, but each can answer for himself, and say, "God helping me, the Church, so far as I can influence it, shall be more what Christ wants it to be, in the future than in the past."—(*From a Church Manual.*)

(b) I think with gratitude of the willing service and devotion of so many hearts and minds. . . . Our Church, I am happy to say, does not consist of a select coterie of devoted workers who break their hearts over duties beyond their strength, while the many stand idly by. More and more it becomes a busy hive, and whilst we are not yet all at work as we might be, and there are still gaps to be filled and talents to be brought out and employed; nevertheless this report is no report of the pastor alone, or of the deacons and officers; it is the report of the whole Church. . . . —(*From Pastor's Letter in Annual Report.*)

Each member is under a solemn obligation to take some part in the work of the Church. Church membership is a brotherhood of service.—(*Extract from Constitution of the same Church.*)

(c) We are earnestly wishful that it should be well understood that our mission is in no sense a "bread and butter" one. The social side of Christian work has had such enormous emphasis given to it of late years that we think it well in our Annual Records to reiterate the fact that our work is, first and foremost, *soul winning*. Everything else, however important in itself, becomes insignificant.—(*From Record of an East London Mission.*)

~~(c)~~ Carved upon one of the lighthouses is this comprehensive declaration of purpose: "To give light and save life;" and we have adopted this motto as expressive of the aim and object of our work.

(c) We are all at it, and always at it. We make no compromise with the Devil, but strike hard and strike quick.

5. CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

(a) *The Fellowship Meeting.*

The experience meeting on Monday evening is exceedingly popular with the God-fearing part of the

congregation. This gathering together for Christian fellowship and communion is no innovation, or mere offspring of modern tastes and ideas, for the prophet Malachi, writing some four hundred years before the birth of Christ, informs us that "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another" (Malachi iii. 16).

Very often forty or fifty of our friends find opportunities in this meeting to tell of trials and triumphs, and we find in this exchange of experiences both consolation and stimulus. We sing the "old time" hymns, have very short exercises, and aim at the cultivation of a vigorous personal piety.

(b) Sunday Services.

Seven o'clock morning prayer is the first order of the day on Sunday morning. At 11 a.m. the service is much valued as a season of worship and spiritual refreshment. At 6.30 the congregation, of considerably over a thousand people, largely consists of men and women who have to bear the daily burden of a laborious life, and who are much in need of the encouragement and stimulus afforded by these bright Gospel meetings. We give a hearty welcome to everybody, rich or poor. Surely these large Sunday evening gatherings, with their solemn warnings, earnest appeals and deep impressions, are touching chords that will vibrate in eternity.

(c) Saturday Prayer Meeting.

"The dullest thing in the world is a dull prayer meeting." Hence we do our best to prevent the Saturday evening meeting for prayer being in any way "dull." We regard the large attendance at this meeting as an unmistakable sign of spiritual health. While the Church continues to pray, we are confident of enjoying "the presence of the Lord."

—(*The above three extracts are from the same Report.*)

(d) A Church Anniversary.

Wednesday, October 24th, "the great day of the feast," commenced with a prayer and praise meeting at 6 a.m., and a large number gathered at that early hour. Punctual to the minute the pastor and officers commenced the

service, which was to continue through the whole day. The supplications were brief, earnest, and to the point; we felt the Master was with us preparing our hearts for further and larger blessings.

At 10 a.m. the pastor was in his vestry to receive the thank-offerings from a loving and loyal people. The first to present their offerings were a group of bright-faced Sunday school scholars. God grant they may grow up to be successful workers in His Church. All day long the dear friends came with their offerings, and as the Lord of the treasury looked down from His throne in glory His heart was made glad.

At 4 p.m. the Rev. * * * * *, of * * * * * (who had spent the day with his sainted mother at * * * * *), preached with remarkable power from Numbers ix. 16. The sermon will never be forgotten, the aroma of it abides with us still. May God long spare His faithful servant to proclaim the "glad tidings."

A very large company partook of tea in the boys' schoolroom. The public meeting commenced at 7 p.m. The pastor gave out the hymn, "All people that on earth do dwell," and then introduced the Chairman, * * * * *, Esq. Deacon * * * * * read the scriptures, and Deacon * * * * * led us to the Throne of Grace. The chairman called on Deacon * * * * * to read the report, which was a very encouraging one. Our various agencies and societies are healthy and doing good and useful work. The hand of our God has been with us for good. The chairman struck a high note in his address, which was listened to with rapt attention, and brought us into the soul-refreshing presence of our Master and Lord. The Revs. * * * * *, * * * * * and * * * * * gave us a rich feast of sanctified wit, heavenly wisdom, and gracious encouragement; never before have we listened to such powerful utterances which roused and enthused our souls. Deacon * * * * * submitted a short financial statement which thrilled our hearts with joy. The result of the anniversary exceeds £166. The pastor (in putting a resolution of thanks to the ladies and gentlemen who had so ably managed the tea) said he was amazed at the liberality of the friends connected with the Tabernacle. Last March they promised over £130 for the Twentieth,

Century Fund. In May they raised over £300 by their bazaar, and the sum of £166 was a magnificent sum for their anniversary. He heartily thanked them all.—(*From a Baptist Church magazine.*)

(e) *Young Christians' Own Society.*

The Society is divided into sections, which comprise—

The "Look-out Section," which takes upon itself the responsibility of obtaining new members.

The "Visitation Section" to look up absentees and visit the sick.

The "Sunday School Section," whose duty it is to bring new and visit absent scholars, and it is now arranging to supply helpers each Sunday evening at the children's separate service.

The "Home Mission Sunshine Section" which has done good work, visiting the needy, and distributing clothes and soup, bread and coal tickets. In connection with this, a working meeting is held before the ordinary meetings. It has supplied and dressed twenty-four dolls. It also supplies at each Wednesday meeting flowers for the table, which are afterwards sent to some sick friend, and places in the pulpit every Sunday morning a small bouquet and cheering message for our president.—(*From a Church Manual.*)

(f) *Singing.*

A number of the young people having expressed a desire to become acquainted with the Tonic Sol-fa system, that they may be able to take a more intelligent and useful part in the service of praise; Mr. * * * * * has established two free classes in which this method of teaching music is adopted.—(*From the Report of a Mission Church.*)

6. EVANGELISTIC EFFORT

(a) *Open-air Work.*

The campaign against sin in our open-air diocese is far from being the least important part of the work. On the tabernacle steps, under lamps, and at street corners, the mission bands are often earnestly engaged in endeavouring to lead men and women to Christ. The theme of Elijah's

open-air address on Carmel, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" has often been the subject of earnest exhortation in the streets. We know something of the good effected already, and are looking forward with bright anticipations to that richer harvest, when "We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves." The greatest of open-air preachers once said, "Lo, I am with you alway," and the promise is fulfilled in every meeting.

(b) The "Bright Hour" Mission has in more than one way proved a source of spiritual strength and blessing to our Church. We are compelled, however, in all candour to add, that in its *primary* object it has, thus far, almost entirely failed; for it was designed to attract those denizens of the neighbourhood who do not attend any House of Prayer, but very, very few of these have been "lured with comfortable words." We are certain, if we could only induce them to attend *one* meeting, we should secure them altogether. The initiatory process, therefore, forms the problem with which we have to deal, and, difficult though it be, we do not despair of its solution. We must be prepared to try all right means that spiritual enterprise may suggest to draw the people to our meetings, while we must be fully determined that, when they *do* come, they shall hear nothing less searching and glorious than the "Word of Life" For this year, and till the victory is won, our war cry must be "* * * * * Town for Christ."—(*From the Report of a Baptist Church.*)

(c) *Visitation.*

The District Visitation Union consists of about sixty earnest workers, who visit monthly nearly five thousand homes round the tabernacle. They leave at every house a copy of our monthly publication, *Gospel Echoes*, and invite the people to attend the services. Many in this way have been won for Christ.—(*From the Report of a Mission Church.*)

(d) *Our Seaside Home.*

From spring to summer it was full of grateful visitors. Real spiritual good has been received, as well as physical restoration. Facing the North Sea, many a tired body has been braced up into health, and, facing Heaven in the seasons of family worship, many a languid soul has been revived. There are now members of the Church

at the tabernacle who found Christ when seeking health at * * * * * Bay.—(*From the Report of a Mission Church.*)

(c) *Our Soup Kitchen.*

This has been open all the winter, and besides the sales of soup and puddings, thousands of quarts have been given away; also thousands of puddings. This place also has proved the meeting-place of needy sinners and a full Saviour.—(*From the Report of a Mission Church.*)

7. REFLECTIONS

(a) "Panic relief" is seldom, if ever, wise relief. The bold, bad, and unscrupulous make a good thing out of it, while the quiet, but truly needy ones get overlooked in the rush. It behoves Christians to keep their heads on their shoulders, even while they give away their hearts to the poor.

(b) The New Year has dawned with great opportunities Tradesmen are quick at finding out the wants of newcomers, and Christian work demands the same keen insight if it is to be successful.

(c) "The one thing I am afraid of about Christianity," said an infidel, "is its Sunday schools." There is scarcely need to say that the infidel's dread is the source of supreme gratification to all who desire the moral improvement of the world. We feel this to be a work of pre-eminent importance, for it is giving the children what they will always need. Future generations may not require our philosophies, poetries, and governments; they may outgrow our sciences and despise our civilization—but they will require our religion. "They may not need our lamps, but they will need our Sun." The Bible will never be out of date.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

§ 3

WESLEYANS

1. METHOD

(a) The Class Meeting.

The 'class meeting' is the unit of the Wesleyan organization, and the following, reprinted from a small booklet, states popularly its constitution and aims :—

Our Class.—What it Is and What it Does.

What we are.—To put the matter in a nutshell, we are a company of men and women, having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, so that we may help each other to work out our own salvation.

We meet for this purpose every week, and we shall be glad to see you with us.

Who may join?—Anyone who feels a sincere desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins, and who is willing to manifest this desire in a practical way, by :

Doing no harm, and avoiding evil of every kind.

Doing good as far as is possible to all men, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily.

Attending the means of grace, both public and private, and by the diligent study of God's Word, and by earnest private prayer.

• *What will be expected of me?*—We trust you will maintain the good character of our class by leading a consistent and blameless life.

That you will be as regular and punctual in your attendance at all the meetings of the class as possible.

That you will pray daily for the class and its members.

That you will try to take part in the meetings by quoting a text, or offering prayer, or giving a short testimony.

That you will strive to lead others both to the class and to the Saviour.

That you will contribute as you are able to the support of the ministry.

Can I do it?—What one cannot accomplish by oneself is often done when several help. We are a band of brothers, and each tries his best to help the others.

Life has many dangerous and slippery places, in passing which, a solitary soul would inevitably fall, whereas all bound together with the cords of love, like Alpine climbers, we can cross them in safety, and daily mount higher and higher.

When we want to be warm we draw near the fire, when we are hungry we come to the dinner table. If then, you feel in your heart a dissatisfaction with your past life, and a God-begotten longing to be better, come with us to the place where God warms, feeds, and blesses us. There you will receive from Him the strength, help, and guidance you need.

Furthermore.—Membership of the class implies membership of the Wesleyan Methodist branch of the Church of Christ, with all its privileges and blessings, such as the right to partake of the Holy Communion, and the opportunity as occasion arises to fill the various official positions in the Church.

Again.—Members have in their leader a friend on whom they can at all times rely, and who will be only too pleased to help them in any matter of doubt or difficulty about which they may consult him.

In conclusion.—Remember that meeting in class, though a very blessed help, will not, by itself, save your soul. Nothing short of a conscious acceptance of Christ as your personal Saviour, and a living union with Him, will avail.

(b) *The Circuit Plan.*

The 'Plan of Religious Services and Directory' is the *vade mecum* of the members of a Wesleyan Circuit. The following particulars are taken from the Plan (forming a small handbook of twenty-four pages) of one of the larger London circuits, composed of five chapels and two small mission centres.

List (omitting names) of Circuit Ministers and Officers :

Ministers (4); Circuit Stewards (2); Secretary of Quarterly Meeting; Secretary of Local Preachers' Meet-

ing; Circuit Chapel Secretary; Education Secretary; Temperance Secretary; Aged and Afflicted Ministers, Fund Treasurer.

List of Officers of one of the Circuit Churches :

Pastor; Society Stewards (2); Poor Stewards (2); Secretary of Leaders' Meeting; Chapel Stewards (2); Trustees' Treasurer; Trustees' Secretary; Organist; Choirmaster; Literary Society Secretaries (2); and Foreign Missions Secretary.

List of Officers of Sunday Schools :

Superintendents (2); Secretaries (2); Treasurer; Juvenile Association Treasurer; Juvenile Association Secretary; Temperance Society Secretaries (2); Band of Hope Conductor; and Band of Hope Secretary.

In addition to the four circuit ministers, ten other ministers, probationary, supernumerary, or connected with other circuits, are attached, together with eighteen local preachers, and the names and addresses of all are given.

Number of members in September, 1900 :

Members	1175
On trial	36
In junior classes	325

The 'Plan' itself, which is arranged for three months in advance, gives the references for the morning and evening lessons, which are the same at all the chapels of the circuit, together with the preachers' names for the morning and evening Sunday services, and the week-night meetings, the latter generally held on Wednesday or Thursday, with a prayer meeting on Friday or Saturday. Any special occasion, such as a collection or an anniversary, is indicated by an initial letter, and to these letters a key is given. This key, arranged in alphabetical order, fills two pages.

Among a page of special notices, the date is given of 'The Quarterly Fast and Day of Intercession,' and

the booklet ends with the following paragraph, to which prominence is given alike by its position and by the type in which it is printed:—

Strangers and visitors are heartily invited, and assured that they will be welcomed at our several services. They are affectionately asked to make themselves known to the pastor of the church, or to the church stewards, that so they may afford an opportunity of introduction to Christian fellowship. Any person desiring a visit from the pastor, or knowing friends in sickness or sorrow who would value such a visit, is requested to inform either the pastor himself or one of the church stewards.

(c) * * * * * **Wesley Guild.**

Motto: "One heart, one way."

The Guild meets every Thursday in the schoolroom at 8 p.m.

Active member's pledge:

"I will earnestly endeavour, in the strength of Christ, to live a truly Christian life, to daily read the Holy Scriptures, and attend to the duty of private prayer. I will attend my class with regularity and fulfil to the best of my ability my duties as a member of the Christian Church. Whenever possible, I will be present at the devotional meeting of the Guild, and take an active part in the proceedings, if required."

Companion member's pledge:

"I will try to avoid in my daily life anything that would bring discredit upon myself or upon the Church of Christ, and will do my best to maintain the friendly spirit of the Guild."—(*From a card of membership.*)

2. SPIRIT

(a) *Gladness of Heart.*

"He went throughout every city . . . shewing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God."

The Divine ideal of religious life and service brings into prominence the sweet grace of cheerfulness. The oft-repeated command given to Israel rendered this phase

of godliness an imperative duty. "Serve the Lord with gladness" was the note of the song of the Hebrew prophet, and the echo came back sweet and clear, "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord." In the day of their deliverance from impending danger, the historian tells us that, "the Jews had light, and gladness and joy;" when the day of their freedom from captivity dawned there was "very great gladness;" and with an exuberance of figure, finding it impossible to express his meaning in plain prose, the sacred writer used the poetic expression—"Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing." God is a God of gladness, joyousness, light, love, beauty; every bright colour in the universe has been placed there by the hand of God, every strain of music, every ray of light, every brilliant gem reveals the hand of the Great Artist. The sweet note of the song-bird, the brilliant dawn of the morning, when heaven's gates seem to open to let out some glimmerings of its own glory, the gorgeous foliage of spring's gay garb, all reveal snatches of the everlasting gladness of which God is the centre and soul; suggesting, meanwhile, the delight He finds in the gladness of the works of His hands.—(*Monthly Magazine for distribution.*)

(b) We would acknowledge the services rendered in our public worship and social meetings by the choir. Choral music has reached such a high state of efficiency, and is now brought within the hearing of all classes, that unless there is a union of musical art with devotion in the sanctuary, the service of God's house will lack the attraction it ought to possess.—(*Annual Report.*)

(c) *Prayer Meetings (Christian Workers' Association).*

. We feel certain that our friends whom we never see at our prayer meetings, would derive great good and be spiritually refreshed, if they would only come and meet us at the throne of grace. To many of us this hour spent in closer communion with our Father in heaven, is the sweetest of the whole week.—(*Annual Report.*)

(d) *Sunday School.*

. the not infrequent testimony of the teachers and the open confession of the scholars, indicate that

many young hearts are being won for the Master's kingdom. The day set apart for universal prayer for children proved a season of rich spiritual blessing to the school, and was the means of leading several of the scholars to definitely decide for Christ.

(e) Wesley Guild Service and Social Hour.

On the evening of Sunday, November 20th, a great joy filled the hearts of our pastor and the officers of the Church and Guild, when the chapel was seen to be once more almost filled for this monthly service and social gathering The service throughout was most impressive. At its close all were invited to remain for the social hour, and a very large proportion of the congregation accepted the invitation. During the few minutes allowed for refreshments and general conversation, the pastor was able to give words of welcome to some friends who had never worshipped with us before. To a visitor the babel of cheerful voices must have sounded strange so soon after the conclusion of a solemn service, but Sabbath influences had not been lost, and an undivided attention in perfect silence was given, when for a few moments Sister * * * * * appealed once more to us in the name of her Master Family prayer brought to a close a most profitable and blessed evening.

On its social side, the Guild is sometimes of the nature of an ordinary literary society, its programmes being very similar to those quoted in the Congregationalist section.

3. THE FORMATION OF A CHURCH IN A NEW DISTRICT

How the work began and grew.

There has been a wonderful transformation. Mr. Cameron Corbett, M.P., waved his magic wand over Hither Green in the year 1896, and houses began to spring up in place of farmers' crops. Street after street spread across the fields, and, so rapid has been the influx of population, that by the end of the year (1900) nearly two thousand houses, mostly of the middle-class type, will be occupied.

Early in 1898 the Lewisham Wesleyan Mission Band began to hold open-air services in the neighbourhood, and in November a workman's dining hall was secured, where regular services began to be held, and a Sunday school was started. This was the first home of the Hither Green Wesleyan Church.

Meanwhile the Lewisham Quarterly Meeting had approached Mr. Corbett with a view to securing land for a church, and being first in the field, they secured the finest site on the whole estate They did this without the slightest expectation of being able to build for many years to come.

In May, 1898, on the recommendation of a representative London Methodist Committee, and at the request of the Lewisham Quarterly Meeting, the case was taken up by the Third London District Synod. Then matters went ahead.

Building operations commenced in June, 1899 A personal appeal to a number of friends in the district raised £1000. A further £360 was obtained when the memorial stones were laid on July 22nd. This stone-laying ceremony was most successful in every way, and a happy augury for the future of the church.

The conference of the same year (1899) appointed the Rev. * * * * * to take charge he entered on his duties at the beginning of September, and found a congregation of thirty worshipping in the "dining hall." There were three members, a society steward, a Sunday school secretary, and two or three teachers All else had to be sought, and until the right men were found the minister must take the various duties himself.

It was a novel experience to preach in such a place as the "dining hall." Scores of flies buzzing around, an occasional cockroach straying over the Bible, the scurrying rush of a startled mouse and on one famous night the marvellous acrobatic performance of a frenzied cat, made it no light task to hold the attention of the congregation. Yet the congregation grew till the room was quite filled, so eager were the people for the Word of Life. Dingy and repulsive though their surroundings were, the presence of the

Saviour made the place glorious with the salvation of sinners. The people proved the blessed truth—

Jesus where'er Thy people meet
There they behold the mercy seat;
Where'er they seek Thee, Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.

Still they looked forward to the completion of the new church with an eagerness bordering on impatience. After every service the congregation went to count the rows of bricks.

The day of deliverance came at last. On April 26th (1900) the handsome new church was opened.

Looking at the whole situation, one can only exclaim, "What hath God wrought." He has far exceeded the most daring expectations, and has blessed His Church at Hither Green not only with large increase, but with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.—(*From a leaflet.*)

4. EVANGELISTIC WORK

(a) *Tract Society and Open-Air Services.*

During the past year the Tract Society has been carrying the glad news of salvation to the poorer districts of our neighbourhood. The value of such work cannot be over-estimated; many people will not, and some cannot, attend a place of worship; and though their Bibles are often unread, the attractive illustration and the well-told incident of the tract frequently wins their attention, and the Word of God, which can make them wise unto salvation, gains an entrance into their hearts. We would earnestly appeal to those whose hearts God has touched, and who desire to extend His kingdom, to devote some of their leisure time to carrying on this useful work of spreading Gospel light in the dark places of our land.

(b) *Open-Air Meetings.*

We are much encouraged by the success of our meetings. The singing of our workers and friends has drawn large audiences, who have listened with great attention to the practical Gospel addresses given, and we

have faith to believe that the seed thus sown by the wayside will bring forth much fruit in the Saviour's vineyard. We roused the opposition of the powers of Evil, during last year's meetings, but we pursued the even tenour of our way and conquered. Our six o'clock meetings in the various streets of the neighbourhood have proved seasons of refreshing from the Lord. We take to the people's doors the Gospel which, alas! so many of them are tempted to neglect.

A new departure has been made in the form of a cottage meeting in * * * * * Terrace. We began on May 17th, and have held the meeting weekly. We sing a few hymns outside, and then retire into the house of a member there. The meetings have been very helpful to those who attend, and while we have had an earnest of God's blessing in the salvation of one soul, we are looking for greater results when we resume in September. This work is chiefly supported by the girls of my Tuesday night class and a few of the mothers.

(c) From a Sister's Report.

In some cases I offer to help in nursing, because of the incomparable opportunity thus given for speaking a word for Christ. Actions speak louder than words, and if you do nothing, in many cases you had better say nothing; people will not listen to words only. If one can bring comparative ease in sickness by a little service one may often gain an influence not to be despised.

5. MISSIONS

Far more characteristic of the Wesleyan body than the Evangelistic efforts of the particular congregation or circuit are the great missions now carried on in all quarters of London. Any ordinary Wesleyan chapel, with its congregation, is in a remarkable degree a replica of others, a uniformity of type explained doubtless to a great extent by a peripatetic pastorate; no one staying long enough to differentiate the activities

of any congregation in any marked way from the rest. The missions, however, do not lack individuality.

(a) *West London Mission.*

HALLS.

St. James's Hall, Regent Street and Piccadilly, W.
Craven Hall, Foubert's Place, (206) Regent Street, W.
Cleveland Hall, Cleveland Street, W.
Somer's Town Hall, Chalton Street, N.W.

HOUSES.

Katherine House, 10, Fitzroy Square, W.
Lincoln House, 60, Greek Street, Soho, W.
St. Luke's House, 50, Osnaburgh Street, Regent's Park, N.W.
Rescue House, 20, Manor Place, W.
Wesley House, Bisley, near Stroud, Gloucestershire.
Cheap Goods Dépôt, 131, Wardour Street, London, W.

FIVE FACTS TO BE REMEMBERED.

- 1.—The West London Mission, so far as regards ordinary church work, is entirely self-supporting.
- 2.—It is not sectarian either in its constitution or its aims. It exists to persuade those who are *outside all churches* to obey and to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3.—Every subscription from those who are not members of the Mission is used *exclusively* in the service of the miserable, the friendless, the destitute and the sick, without distinction of sex, race, or creed.
- 4.—*Small regular* subscriptions are as valuable as the occasional large gifts of the wealthy.
- 5.—The best contribution of all is—YOURSELF.

Summary of Work and Agencies of the West London Mission for one year.

RELIGIOUS WORK—1685 persons in full or probationary membership with the Mission Church at St. James's Hall, Craven Hall, Cleveland Hall and Chalton Hall. 3172 services and meetings held during the year, exclusive of three Sunday schools, three Bands of Hope, and six mothers' meetings. Lantern mission services or meetings held *every night*. We have thirty-one Society or Devotional classes, a Bible-class, and a Theological class.

OPEN-AIR WORK.—Services in the streets, alleys and parks.

TEMPERANCE WORK.—At each hall a Temperance Society, a Temperance Legion and a Band of Hope. Temperance work done systematically in the open air, and every Christmas a *Drunkards' Dinner*, with permanent results.

THRIFT SOCIETIES.—Men and Women's Slate Clubs, Penny Banks, Clothing, Provident and Boot Clubs, Goose and Christmas Clubs, in connection with which last Christmas we purchased 2500 different articles, including drapery, glass and china, furniture, grocery, beef and poultry of every kind. From these Thrift Societies about £2500 of the people's money passed through our hands during the year.

MUSIC.—Orchestra, Military Band, Brass Band and Choirs.

DISTRICT VISITING, &c., by the Sisters, Missioners, and a voluntary staff, also *Room-to-Room Guilds* (at Craven alone seventeen thousand visits were paid during the year), *Public-house Guild*, *Lodging-house Guild*, and *Workhouse Guild*.

SOCIAL WORK.—Servants' Registry, Men's Labour Bureau (*many provided with clothes, tools, and work*), Soup Kitchen, and social relief.

MEDICAL WORK.—Two Dispensaries. Hospital-trained nurses visiting the sick in their homes. A *crèche*, or day nursery. Also

THE HOME OF PEACE.—A hospital for the respectable dying poor.

GUILD OF THE BRAVE POOR THINGS.—A social union of the crippled, the deformed, the blind, and the partially paralysed.

WORKHOUSE TEAS every month to aged people in three large workhouses—St. Pancras, St. Marylebone, and St. James's.

RESCUE WORK.—A Rescue and Preventive Home at Manor Place. The Rescue Sisters in Piccadilly at night.

A HOLIDAY HOME at Bisley, Gloucestershire.

MEN'S GUILD.—Literary and Debating Society, Cycle Club, Rambling Club, Swimming Club, &c.

SATURDAY EVENING CONCERTS, and other entertainments, and *counter-attractions*.

THE PEOPLE'S DRAWING ROOM at each hall for the poor of the neighbourhood.

THE POOR MAN'S LAWYER.—Gratuitous legal advice by an eminent solicitor, with most beneficial results.

GIRLS' CLUBS, BOYS' CLUBS, CHILDREN'S PLAY HOUR, CHEAP GOODS DEPÔT.—(*Report.*)

(b) *London Central Mission.*

"Christianity not played out." A few facts about the work.

We have twelve hundred and nine members meeting in society in the mission, with over two hundred juniors.

Notwithstanding the heavy drain upon our membership caused by the constant removals from the district, we rejoice in increasing membership. God continues to bless us constantly with conversions.

We have a large amount of social work going on in connection with our church, both in Clerkenwell and Holborn.

Our Sunday schools have twelve hundred children in attendance.

Our Home of Rest at Tooting Bec is already proving a great blessing to our poor folk.

Our slate club has over seven hundred members.

Our mothers' meeting has over four hundred members.

Our pleasant evenings for the people are crowded week by week.

• Our temperance meetings are gloriously successful in converting the drunkard to sobriety and to God.

Our Holborn Town Hall services are growing in prosperity. God is blessing this extension abundantly.

Our lodging-house visitors are always welcomed.

Our brass and orchestral bands are most useful in our work.

Our tract visitors distribute from door to door over three hundred thousand tracts during the year.

Our mission band workers are always at it in many ways, seeking to extend in the open air the Master's kingdom.

Our Sisters continue their work in the district, each Sister visiting over sixty families weekly. This work in its social relief is necessarily expensive.

Our medical mission is most useful to the poor in the district.

• We want £500 at this anniversary. Will you help us continue and increase our work?

If so, please fill up Promise form and post direct to one of the addresses given.—(*Leaflet accompanying Annual Report for 1897.*)

Report of a meeting to raise funds for enlarging the chapel of the foregoing mission.

The success which has attended the working of this chapel on mission lines would be considered phenomenal, were it not for the fact that wherever similar work has been attempted on similar lines, similar success has followed.

The chairman of the meeting delivered a bright and hopeful address. He first sketched the history of the chapel, in the inauguration of which he took part. After a period of depression, they had found the way to fill the chapel. Souls, too, were being saved, and that was best of all. That ought always to be so in Methodist chapels. Away with your preachers and people who were content without it! Of all the Churches, Methodism cut the most sorry figure unless a real work of God was going on. The chairman was particularly severe on the idea that every big chapel must have a little mission hall somewhere near, so that conversions might take place there and not disturb the regular services. "Tell me," said he, "how the prayer meetings are attended, and I shall be better able to test the condition of that church than by attending some public service; we Methodists can pray ourselves out of any difficulty." Subscriptions to the building fund were announced.

The Rev. Mr. * * * * * who delivered one of his cheery and optimistic addresses, stated that this meeting was the fourth celebration of the kind he had attended since Sunday, and it certainly did not look as though Methodism were a dying force. A further list of promises being announced, the Rev. * * * * * stated that £4000 might be counted on: a result which fully justified the hearty manner in which the congregation sung the Doxology prior to dispersing.

(c) Shoreditch Wesleyan Mission.

The boundaries of our district may be covered by a smart walk before breakfast, but the area numbers not less than two hundred thousand souls. Here is a population as large as that of Hull, consisting of people of *all* trades and *no* trade, reeking in sin and misery, whose social and spiritual condition is at once a menace, a sorrow, and a shame. Public-houses of the worst class abound;

clubs, social and political, number their members by the thousand. A census, taken a few years ago in the more respectable half of the district, showed that religious accommodation is provided for only one out of every sixteen persons, and that only one in one hundred attended service on Sunday morning, and one in fifty in the evening. My opinion is that, taking the whole district at the present time, hardly one in five hundred enters a place of worship on Sunday.

One feels how impossible it is to at all adequately appreciate the willing and cheerful help of our own members, or to give even a small conception of the work done, with its blessed results. The once empty chapel is now nearly full; men, women, and children are being saved from the worst forms of sin and vice to the joy and sanctity of the Christian life. The old Gospel has a mighty appeal to such people, and they do not show themselves slow in responding to it.

One Sunday recently, between the sermon and the sacrament, four men and two women entered the inquiry room. The same day another claimed pardon for sin at the early morning prayer meeting; whilst still another was taken from the open-air service to a cottage the night before, and kept on his knees until he found Christ at 12 o'clock at night.—(*Report.*)

§ 4

OTHER METHODISTS

PRIMITIVE METHODISTS

UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCH

METHODIST NEW CONNEXION

I. ORGANIZATION

(a) Methodist New Connexion.

The following particulars are taken from the "Hand-Book" of a circuit composed of two chapels.

The services held at each chapel are almost identical, and the list for one of them is printed thus :—

Order of Services.

Divine Worship—Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Wednesday, 7.30 p.m.

Lord's Supper—Evening of first Sunday in month.

Baptisms—Morning of first Sunday in month.

Marriages—Application to the minister.

Sabbath School—10 a.m. and 2.45 p.m.

Band of Hope—Monday, 7 p.m.

Christian Endeavour—Thursday, Junior, 6.30; Senior, 8 p.m.

Choir Practice—Wednesday, 8 p.m.

Literary Society—Friday, 7.30 p.m.

Six "preachers" are attached, and eight auxiliaries. The "Order of Public Service" is arranged for four months, instead of three as with the Wesleyans.

The *Circuit* officers are:—Treasurer; Secretary; Chapel Auditor; Local Preachers' Secretary; Sunday School Secretary; Mission Treasurer; Mission Secretary; Magazine Correspondent and Plan Committee.

The officers at one of the *Chapels* are:—Treasurer; Secretary; Pew Steward; Poors' Steward; Seat Stewards (2); School Superintendents (2); Sunday School Secretary; Secretary of Band of Hope; Secretary of Literary Society; Representatives to Free Church Council (6); Ladies' Sewing Meeting Treasurer and Secretary; Offertory Stewards (2); Y.P.S.C.E. Secretary; Secretary of Missions; Sidesmen (2); Choir-master; Organist and Sexton.

The following "Directions to Church Members" are printed:—

1.—When members are in affliction and desirous of Christian counsel, they are earnestly requested to inform one of the ministers, by direct message or letter, as ministers, any more than doctors, cannot know that people are ill unless informed of the fact.

2.—When members are about to leave the circuit to reside elsewhere, it is requested that they will inform one of their ministers of their intention, in a private interview, or at the close of one of the services.

3.—Those who have removed to a distance with a view to reside permanently, or only for a considerable time, are requested as early as practicable to seek union with the Church.

4.—If one member find another in poverty, and in consequent need for

a season of pecuniary aid, let him cause the same to be reported to a minister or steward.

5 —The collections made at the Lord's Supper are applied, after a small deduction for the expenses of that ordinance, to the relief of the poor members of the Church, and as "the poor ye have always with you," and sometimes their necessities are great, a constant and generous remembrance of them is needful, and cannot but be regarded as a privilege.

6 —Members are specially requested to pay courteous attention to strangers, and to provide for them comfortable accommodation as far as circumstances will admit.

N B —Pews in the churches must be regarded as FREE after the singing of the second hymn.

(b) *Primitive Methodists.*

Circuit regulations.

1. *Preachers.*—Every preacher is earnestly requested to attend to his own appointments. If this is impracticable, he must give three days' notice to the minister, who will get a supply. Should a preacher neglect an appointment, he must furnish a satisfactory reason to the following quarterly meeting. No person is allowed to preach in any of our places of worship unless he is authorised by the circuit authorities; ministers of other denominations excepted. All Sunday morning services must close at 12.15, and the evening service at 7.45, by order of the quarterly meeting.

2. *Leaders.*—Every leader must call over the names of his members at every class meeting, and collect the class money *weekly*, and the ticket money *quarterly*, and see that the absentees are visited. It is essential to the prosperity of the station that the *Connexional Rules* be kindly explained to the members and faithfully carried out. The leaders are requested to bring their class books to their respective leaders' meetings.

3. *Society Stewards.*—The duties of a Society Steward are:—

(1) To furnish a written notice of everything to be published the Sabbath before it should take place. (2) Make all needful arrangements for public meetings. (3) Make preparations for Sacraments and Love Feasts. (4) See that all collections are made according to plan. (5) To see Society's Report is properly filled up and sent to the quarterly meeting in proper time.

4. *Members.*—The attention of all our members is called to the following Rule:—"No person must be admitted a member or allowed to remain one, who attends vain or worldly amusements or wastes his time in public-houses, or is otherwise immoral in his conduct." Any member intending to remove from his circuit is desired to give his leader or minister the full address of his future residence, that a credential may be sent to the superintendent of the station to which he is about to remove.

(c) *United Methodist Free Church.*

An Annual Report.

Progress and Prosperity have marked the course of the past year. Further increase of members and increased income, call for continued thanksgiving.

"Praise ye the Lord, praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord." (Psalm cxiii. 1.)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy begat us again into a living hope," &c. (1 Peter i. 3, 4, 5.)

The Public Services have been well sustained, and we rejoice that the regenerating and quickening power of the Holy Ghost has been manifested in the higher spiritual life of the Church, and in the salvation of souls.

We have added thirty-nine members since our last report, and have lost twenty by removals and two by death, thus showing an increase of seventeen. The present membership is one hundred and seventy-five and five on trial.

The Sunday School has now two hundred and sixty-one scholars. The average attendance in the morning is one hundred and in the afternoon one hundred and ninety-nine.

Bible-classes for men and women are held every Sunday afternoon at 2.45.

Adult School Union. A branch was started in October with twelve members, and has now thirty-three men and three classes. The meetings are held on Sunday mornings from 9 to a quarter-past 10 o'clock.

The P.S.A. Men's Meeting is held in the chapel on Sunday afternoon from 3 to 4 o'clock; the average attendance being fifty-five men.

The Band of Hope continues its meetings. Never was it more necessary to train children in the principles and practice of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and tobacco. The average attendance is sixty.

The International Bible Reading Association has now a total membership of over six hundred and seven thousand, and the cards are issued in nineteen or more foreign languages. Our hope is that in the case of every member of the I. B. R. A. seeds of truth are being sown by the daily readings, which will soon germinate and produce the expected fruit. Above all, let us join our voices in prayer, that God may richly bless the readings and help its members to live in the light of His Holy Word. Our branch has one hundred and forty members.

The Y.P.S.C.E. is vigorous and progressive; the Junior Society meets on Tuesday evenings, and has an average attendance of thirty. The Senior Society meets on Thursday evenings, and has forty-four active, one associate, and eleven honorary members. The young men of the Christian Endeavour Society conduct a service in the chapel once a quarter.

The Pentecostal League Centre meets on Friday evenings from 8 to 9 o'clock, and has a membership of one hundred and six. The League offers a way of uniting believers of all denominations in prayer for the Holy Spirit. The need of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is abundantly proved and candidly admitted. We want this spirit of prayer amongst us, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him."

A Holiness Meeting is held on Monday afternoons at 3.15. The blessing of holiness may be experienced whenever the soul turns from unbelief, and trusts God for it. Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." (Titus ii. 14.)

The Church Prayer Meeting is held on Friday evenings at 9 o'clock.

The Institute meetings were held on Saturday evenings from January to April, the average attendance being thirty-one.

Home and Foreign Missions. The amount raised during the year was £36. 11s 5½d, of which £25. 8s 2d was for the U. M. F. C. Mission, £10. 13s 7d for Dr. Harry Guinness' Congo Balolo Mission, and 9s 8½d for the North Africa Mission.

Open Air Services were held during the summer and autumn on Friday and Sunday evenings.

Chapel Choir. We much regret that the choir has lost so many of its members lately, and earnestly hope that the vacant places will soon be filled, so that the choir may be able to sing an anthem at each service.

Organ is in need of repairs

Finance It will be seen that the income is not quite equal to the expenditure, but we are grateful to find that the weekly offerings have increased from £194. 6s 3½d to £205. 11s 1d.

As the Free-will Offering is our only regular source of income to meet all expenses, we commend to those who have not hitherto contributed through the envelope system, to adopt this method of giving regularly a specified amount such as the bounty of the Lord enables them to do.

2. PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF ACTION

(a) The following letter, addressed to his congregation by the minister of one of the United Methodist Free Churches, though long, is of the deepest interest throughout :—

*An open Letter to the Members of * * * * **
Church.

MY BELOVED FRIENDS,—On Sunday and Monday, September 26th and 27th, we celebrate (D.V.) the Anniversary of our fourth year together. It should be a time of much thankfulness and rejoicing. God has honoured us with not a little success, for which we most heartily praise Him. In the four years, He has sent us over one hundred and fifty new members, so that all the time there has been a steady increase both in the congregations and offertories at our public services. But best of all—and what is nearest to the heart of Jesus—

THE
ENCOURAGING
PAST.

“the regenerating and quickening power of the Holy Ghost has been manifested in the higher spiritual life of the Church, and in the salvation of souls,” as Mr. * * * * * so truly said in his report at the June Anniversary. Again and again God has given us most marked tokens of His presence and favour in the way that we most desire them, viz., in the arousing of sleeping sinners, in the recovery of the backslider, in the sanctification and infilling of believers, and in the extension of the kingdom of righteousness and peace in our midst.

I am looking forward to our Fourth Anniversary

Services with great delight and expectancy for many reasons. Let me mention some of them. First and foremost, I am believing that these special services will more than result in the upbuilding and confirmation of believers, but rather in the definite yielding up of hearts to the indwelling of the Spirit of God, that out of them shall flow rivers of living water to the thirsty world around. As Monro Gibson has said recently, "It is not outpouring that is wanted so much as an inletting. It

PREPARATION
FOR FUTURE
WORK.

is not the windows of heaven that are shut, but our hearts. It is free course for the Spirit's movements from heart to heart that is wanted." I cannot but believe that we shall be of one heart and mind in seeking this special preparation for service, by the study of God's Word and prayer, and that we shall gladly welcome, painful as it may be, whatever God may say to us concerning anything that is hindering His working through us. As Mr. Moody wrote a few weeks ago in inviting God's people to the Conference at Northfield, "Let us come together to gather wheat with which to feed a starving world."

Then, of course, I am hoping great things from the Anniversary in connection with our Thanksgiving Fund.

THANKSGIVING
FUND.

It seems to me most fitting and natural that our deep thankfulness for four years of extraordinary blessings, as well as our desire to take full advantage of the immense opportunities that await us on every side, should lead not only to renewed consecration, but to a *special united effort*, at the beginning of our winter's campaign, to remove the balance of the debt-burden that for the past four years has cumbered our work. It will serve to make our re-consecration more real and lasting if it is accompanied by definite self-denying gifts. It will be a delightful opportunity of

UNITED
CO-OPERATION.

proving the intensity of our devotion to God and love to man. Everyone must decide for himself—after prayer and reflection—what he can give, and let us also seek to influence our Christian friends and our households to join us in this good work. When we come to look through the completed list of donations from the Church, we believe we shall find that the youngest and poorest members have been able to

economise some small sum, and we know that the smallest gifts of those who cannot give more are as precious in the sight of God as the large contributions of the wealthy.

We might have raised the money by a bazaar, but it was universally felt that we would just put our trust in God and have nothing to do with any worldly methods whatever. When money is needed for Christ's Church, does it not grieve the Holy Spirit when, instead of relying simply and solely on God, we appeal to the world for help, or adopt any of the world's low arts and devices to secure subscriptions? Is there not always a danger,

RELIANCE ON
GOD. in connection with the money matters of a church, of playing upon the lower motives of pride and rivalry, of display or pleasure?

Thanks be to God, we have been led to take up this scheme, not in the natural power of this world and its spirit, but in the supernatural power of God's Spirit. It is not a "business" matter, but a faith-effort. Our dependence is not upon the thoroughness of our organization, or the vigour of our appeals. We are depending

APPEALS TO
GOD. more on appeals to God than on appeals to men. It is His enterprise, for which He is supremely responsible. He alone can move

the people to give their money. He holds the key of the situation, and is more jealous and zealous for His work than any of His workmen. It is therefore of the first importance that we should keep in living, loving contact with God, and use only Scriptural and spiritual methods in raising this two hundred and fifty pounds.

I have to confess that when this scheme was first launched the magnitude of it—for such a small church—made me feel that success could only come by such prolonged and fervid efforts in every direction that, I fear, I was looking far more to men and methods than to God, and I have to thank Mr. * * * * *, of Cardiff, for opening my eyes to the fact. In reply to our request that he should take the chair at the Pastor's Anniversary meeting, he wrote: "Should I be in London about the date you name, it will afford me pleasure to pay you a visit." And, after expressing hearty interest in our work, added, "But

MR. * * * * *'S
WARNING.

I am afraid you are putting too much reliance on the arm of flesh and more than on the arm of God." This led to much heart-searching and prayer, and to the confession to Mr. * * * * * that God had shown me that it was only too true what he had surmised, and that by Divine grace this piece of Christian work, and all other work for God, should not be done in the energy of the flesh, but in the energy of the Spirit, trusting more to His direction than to human wisdom.

About this time I came across this statement by Dr. Pierson, which impressed me much: "Let us put prayer *before*, not behind, our activity." I

DR.
PIERSON.

pass it on to you, my dear friends, and pray that you may learn the lesson, if not already learned, that God has taught me in connection with this effort of ours, that He as the Invisible Administrator, if we will only fully trust Him, will not only supply all the money needful, but do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. Was it not so three years ago when we looked to Him for the £100 that was needed? Did He not send us nearly £10 more than we asked for? What

THREE YEARS
AGO.

a rebuke to unbelief, to un-Scriptural appeals, to dependence on man, to all secular and worldly methods in raising money, and to despair in great straits! Yes, with many others, I am believing that God will bring us within measurable distance of the £250 on September 26th and 27th, and we are praising Him as if the work was already done.

I should like us—and I am sure God wants us—to take for our motto for our fifth year's work together, if spared, just this one word—*Conversions*. And, by the Spirit's help, to make everything subservient to that.

CONVERSIONS. Blessed be God we have seldom been without visible results, but there have been times when the results have been so meagre that I have gone home with a sad and troubled heart. When we remember that the conversion of sinners is the one great object of Christ's death on the cross and His life in glory, the one object for which the Holy Ghost was given, the one object for the Church's existence and continuance on earth, we cannot but so believe in conversions as to make it our

one motto and sacrifice everything for it. Well may Andrew Murray say that "The church that is without conversions, however large and flourishing its congregations, is not answering its destiny, is on a downward path, is most grieving and dishonouring to God." What must God think of those "three thousand churches in the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies in America that did not report a single member added by profession of faith last year?" God forbid that such a lamentable state of affairs should ever come to pass in England.

REV. ANDREW
MURRAY.

The Sunday morning service is of great importance in connection with the conversion of sinners, as it is here that converted men and women are led on to all the fullness of blessing that lies beyond conversion, and are thus prepared to be used of God in whatever way He shall choose. A spirit-filled, well-attended *morning* service is the best preparation for an evening Evangelistic service. Let us therefore, as God's people, make it a rule never to miss our own special time of waiting upon God in His house at the beginning of the Sabbath, that we may be brought into such deepened sympathy with Jesus Christ, and be so surcharged with the Spirit of God, that as we sit in our pews in the evening service the unconverted around us shall not be able to resist the magnetism of God's presence within us. The measure of the Holy Spirit's power in any service is in proportion to the purity of God's Word and the presence of God's believing, spirit-filled people.

SUNDAY
MORNING.

SPIRITUAL
MAGNETISM.

Can we reasonably or Scripturally expect that much definite good will be accomplished amongst the unsaved in the evening if the members of the church, having neglected their Sabbath morning worship, come in such a listless, unfed and unspiritual condition that God cannot use them? If there be a lack of conversions it will be owing to nothing but the lack of the Holy Spirit in God's people, whether in the pulpit or in the pew. Speaking for myself, God has been showing me lately that He wants me to be more and more definite in bringing sinners to a point—

IMMEDIATE
DECISION.

that I should make more earnest appeals for immediate decision and for a public confession of it in our services. If we fail to elicit any response—that is God's business: we can only do our duty and act as He leads us; but, as Mr. Spurgeon once said to his students, we “shall get results when we expect them.” Oh my brothers and sisters, plead for a mighty travail of souls for the unsaved.

A short time ago I came across a statement of Andrew Murray's that deeply impressed me. It was this:—“The pulpit is God's chosen channel for conversions.” It

made me feel the solemnity of my position as
SOLEMNITY OF
PREACHING. a preacher of the Gospel, and led me to pray

that my preaching might never be with
 “enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstra-
 tion of the Spirit and power.” I bless God, my beloved
 friends, that you would not for one moment tolerate the
 prettily-written essays, the literary productions, the
 political speeches, the discourses strongly tinged with
 Higher Criticism and Evolution, the lies about God and
 His Word that, in not a few churches of our land, take

the place of the great and fundamental
SUBSTITUTES
FOR
THE GOSPEL. doctrines of the Gospel. You are perfectly
 right in demanding, clearly and imperiously,
 that no man who cannot expound the
 Scriptures as the very Word of God, and hold forth
 the sacrifice of Christ as the Divinely-planned and
 Divinely-accepted satisfaction for man's sin, shall ever
 have entrance into your pulpit.

I bless God that He has made me pastor of a church
 that gladly and unhesitatingly stands by any true man
 that will preach a full and faithful gospel. This is a great
 comfort to me as I stand upon the threshold of another

year with you, for I feel that the Truth, the
THE WHOLE
TRUTH. whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth,
 must be told as never before, in season and out
 of season; and does not this mean, faithfully and fear-
 lessly telling the unsaved that they are depraved sinners,
 that the wrath of God has gone out against them, that
 hell awaits them if they remain impenitent and unbe-
 lieving, and that they must be born again if they expect

to enter heaven? And must not backsliders, who have sadly fallen from grace and become like barren fig-trees, be faithfully dealt with, and be reminded that the greatest weakness of any Church are those who wear the livery of Christ, and "wound Him in the house of His friends," and that the mischief they do cannot be computed?

WORLDLY CHRISTIANS. Similarly, worldly-minded members must be told again and again that through their unspiritual lives they not only fail to contribute their share of spiritual force, but they are positively blocking the path by which it must pass.

Oh, this dry-rot of worldliness in the Church! It must be driven out at all costs. It is said that the ship on the sea is all right, but when the sea gets into the ship it is all wrong. And this is true of the Church and the life of God. The Church is all right in the world, but when the world gets into the Church all is wrong. God cannot and will not use the men and women who are full of the world. Especially must we urge our younger members to set their faces and their hearts like flint against all worldliness, and live wholly for Him who died for them. Great emphasis will have to be laid upon the awful problem of heart depravity, from which come the worldliness, the evil thoughts and words, the cruelties, the thefts, the murders, the falsehoods, and all the swarm of mischiefs and miseries that not only afflict and dishonour the world, but alas, alas, are often associated, through professing Christians, with the cause of Christ. In all our work we must seek for nothing less than putting Jesus Christ into men's souls, and their entire regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

It must be unceasingly insisted upon that the one remedy for the inconsistencies and heresies of the Church, and the grosser sins of the outside world, is holiness of heart and life, and that there is very little chance for the masses around us to be saved unless God's professing people rise to all their privileges in Jesus Christ. John Wesley, our great founder, said: "When Christian perfection is not strongly

THE REMEDY.

and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God, and little life in the members. Speak and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press the believers to expect full salvation now, you must not look for any revival." We want this coming year a perpetual revival, and we shall have it in spite of all that earth and hell can do, if, as a Church, we will only walk in God's will, and give ourselves wholly to the Spirit. Andrew Murray says, "The Church that puts this first, that in apostolic fashion separates itself from the world, and forsakes all trust in its own goodness or wisdom, to wait on the power from heaven—that Church will have conversions."

Could we not as a Church do more for the good of those whom God has placed within our reach? Ought we not to have a mothers' meeting for the poor women of the neighbourhood? I could name more than one or two who are eminently capable of taking up such a work. Could not the Mission Band and the Christian Endeavour

NEW
MOVEMENTS. conjointly conduct a week-night Cottage Meeting in some needy locality during the winter months, and perhaps arrange for a Sunday evening meeting too? Ought not the Boys' and Girls' Guilds to be re-started? Ought, as some have suggested, a Sunday evening children's service to be commenced? There is one department of God's work in connection with which, it seems to me, we ought to do much. I refer to the temperance cause. We thank God for our Band of Hope, but ought we not to have an adult temperance society in connection with our Church? I have every confidence that a large number of our members and others would gladly enrol themselves.

Would not Temperance Sunday, November 28th, be a good time for its inauguration? No doubt we could arrange a monthly or quarterly meeting.

Let us pray about it. We cannot do too much—probably we are not doing half enough—to stem the
awful tide of intemperance that flows through
our land. Think of the unspeakable evils,
that are associated with intemperance: how
it turns God's temple into a chamber of defilement, how
it makes our State Christianity an imperial hypocrisy,

INTEMPER-
ANCE.

how it degrades the bodies of those about us to the level of bestiality, and leaves them well-nigh bereft of reason. But for drink we should scarcely have any crime in our midst. Half our murders are committed under this evil inspiration. And is it not too often the motive of the theft? We might be a holy nation but for this fiery libation. God help us during this coming year, in season and out of season, to cry out against this terrible iniquity. Unless we do we may yet perish in the doom that will one day overtake the unreformed British Empire.

And now, in closing, let me ask two things, at your hands: First, pray much for your pastor and office-bearers. In these days of worry, and leaders' meetings, and committees, and tea-meetings, and manifold public

PRAY FOR
US.

business, and endless talk and discussion, we are in danger of getting secularised, losing tone, and coming short of the fulfilment of the great purposes of our ministry. Secondly, claim at the beginning of our fifth year's work together, on September 26th and 27th, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all who shall gather at the meetings, such as took

ANOTHER
PENTECOST.

place in Jerusalem as the one hundred and twenty were "all with one accord in one place" in prayer and faith; and it shall be with us as it was with them—a mighty revival shall begin in the neighbourhood around us that shall sweep hundreds into the Kingdom of God. God grant that it may be so, for Jesus Christ's sake.

I remain,
Your affectionate pastor and friend,

* * * * *

August, 1897.

(b) *Primitive Methodists.*

The following specimens of a series of appeals are characteristic in their heartiness and brightness of expression. They appear boldly printed on the first page of a little chapel magazine of four pages,

a monthly issue of which in this form was maintained for a long period :—

The Welcome.

July, 1897. Circulation 5000.

Primitive Methodist Chapel, * * * * *, S.W.
 Preaching services, Sundays 11 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.
 Tuesday, 7.30 p.m. Sunday school, 10 a.m. and 2.45 p.m.
 Band of Hope, Wednesday at 7. Y. P. S. C. Endeavour,
 Friday at 7. Rev. * * * * *, Minister.

•WELCOME! WELCOME! WELCOME!

If you know yourself a sinner, and long to be relieved of your burthen—**Welcome.** “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”—1 Tim. i. 15.

If you are a child of God longing for fuller salvation—**Welcome.** “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

If you want opportunities to work for the God you love—**Welcome.** “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.”—Matt. ix. 37.

If you are careless and have no desire whatever for either God or His house—**Welcome.** “When they shall say Peace and Safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.”—1 Thess. v. 3.

“Old friends and new, tried friends and true,
 Welcome, welcome, all of you.”

Other examples follow; each being preceded by the particulars as to services, &c. :—

WHO? WHAT? WHEN?

Who is wanted?

You. No matter what your name, age, or character.—
 “Thou art the man.”—2 Sam. xii. 7.

What am I wanted for?

SALVATION. To become a pardoned sinner, a child of God, and heir of heaven. “The Grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.”—Titus ii. 11.

When am I wanted ?

Now. This instant. As you sit or stand and read.—
“Behold, now is the accepted time.”—2 Cor.
vi. 2.

“ Ah ! do not of my goodness doubt
My saving grace for all is free ;
I will in no wise cast him out,
That comes a sinner unto Me ;
I can to none myself deny.
Why, sinners, will ye perish, why ? ”

YOU, YOURSELF.

YOU are the very person whom a loving Saviour gave His
• life to redeem.

You, if unsaved, are in pressing need of the benefits
procured by His death.

You can get peace and satisfaction from no other source.

You will meet with the heartiest of welcome when you
apply to Him for salvation.

You will find the grandest adaptation between His gifts
and your needs.

You will find in Him the friend and companion you need
to “ divide your sorrows and double your joys.”

You will be eventually handed on to a glorious immor-
tality in His presence.

WHAT DO YOU WANT ?

FRIENDSHIP ? “ Ye are my *friends* if ye do whatsoever
I command you.”—John xv. 14.

WISDOM ? “ If any of you lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God,
that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth
not ; and it shall be given him.”—James i. 5.

DEFENCE ? “ In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence ;
and His people shall have a place of *refuge*.”—
Prov. xiv. 26.

STRENGTH ? “ He giveth power to the faint ; and to them
that have no might, He increaseth *strength*.”—
Isaiah xl. 29.

VICTORY? "Thanks be to God which giveth us the *victory* through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 57.

"My God shall supply all your need."—Phil. iv. 19.

WHICH IS BEST?

W-hen the burthens of life are many, painful and heavy, is it best to bear them alone or to have God's help?

H-aving corrupt and vicious natural tendencies, is it best to give them the control of life, or to place them under the restraints of Divine Grace?

I-n doing conflict with the Devil, is it desirable to fight single-handed or to have the assurance that God is on your side?

C-oming into contact with affliction and bodily weakness, is it not an advantage to have the sympathy of One known to be touched with the feeling of human infirmity, rather than to be helpless, friendless, and forlorn?

H-aving dying experiences to face, will it not mitigate the terrors of the tomb to consciously know yourself to be the child of God and heir of heaven rather than to be cast away in the darkness and fury of Divine wrath?

Your answer, please.

HARK! A KNOCK!

Who's there? "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."
—Rev. iii. 20.

Who are You? "I am the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John xiv. 6.

What do You want? "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will *sup* with him, and he with Me."—Rev. iii. 20.

What have you to give? "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Rom. xiv. 17.

"Come quickly in, Thou heavenly guest, nor ever hence remove;
But sup with us, and let the feast be everlasting love."

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

Simplicity. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."—Psalm l. 15.

Speed. "Before they call, I will answer ; and while they are speaking, I will hear."—Isaiah lxxv. 24.

Accuracy. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him."—Matt. vi. 8.

Access. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. iv. 16.

•
"Oh, what peace we often forfeit ! Oh, what needless pain we bear !
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."

§ 5

PRESBYTERIANS

I. PRINCIPLES, CONSTITUTION, AND OFFICE-HOLDERS

(a) The Presbyterian system of Church Government derives its distinctive name from the Greek word "Presbuteros," which signifies "Elder."

Its leading principles of faith and polity may be briefly stated as follows:—

Doctrine—I. Its DOCTRINES are Trinitarian and Evangelical, proclaiming the Love of the Father, Redemption by the Son, and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

All who profess faith in Jesus Christ and lead a consistent life may become Members in full communion.

Government—II. Its GOVERNMENT is representative in character.

Elders—1. The Elders of each Congregation constitute the Spiritual Court by which the affairs of the Congregation are administered and the Sacraments dispensed. This Court is termed the SESSION, and is presided over by the Minister, who is styled Moderator.

Office of Elder—2. Elders are elected to office by the Members in full communion with the Church, but after ordination they hold their spiritual orders for life or till they are deposed.

Jurisdiction—3. Members of the Congregation are subject to the Session. The Minister is elected by the Members of the Congregation, but holds his office by authority of, and is accountable to, the Presbytery.

Presbytery—4. The Minister and one Representative Elder from each of a group of neighbouring Congregations constitute a Presbytery; and the assembled Presbyteries constitute the Supreme Court of the Church, which in England is called the SYNOD, and in some countries, the General Assembly.

Appeal—5. From the decisions of each of the inferior Courts an appeal lies to the one above it.

Deacons' Court—6. The financial and secular affairs of each Congregation are entrusted either to a Court of Deacons, who are ordained to office for life, or to a Congregational Committee, the Members of which are elected yearly; but these always act under the supervision and authority of the Spiritual Courts.

The system thus combines congregational self-government with the centralisation of the whole Church under one general authority.

Substantially this is the system of government adopted by the greater number of the Reformed Churches. It prevails in more or less completeness in France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Wales, Scotland, and the North of Ireland, as well as in the United States, Canada, Australia, and other British Colonies. The total number of Presbyterian Congregations in the world exceeds 36,000, representing a membership of over seven millions, and a population of over ninety millions.

Thus the "Presbyterian Church of England" is a branch of one of the largest ecclesiastical families of the Christian Church.

The Church's authoritative Manual of Procedure is the "Book of Order."

The Presbytery of London has been divided into two—London (North),

and London (South). The Presbytery of London (North), which consists of fifty-two Congregations, including Notting Hill, meets at the College, Queen's Square, Guilford Street, W.C., at five o'clock on the second Tuesday of each month. The meetings are open to the public.—(*From Church Year Book.*)

(b) Church Calendar.

Weekly Meetings in Church or Lecture Hall.

Sunday—10 a.m., Bible Study Circle; 10.30 a.m., Prayer Meeting; 11 a.m., Public Service; 3.15 p.m., Children's Service; 3.30 p.m., Young Women's Bible-class; 6.30 p.m., Prayer Meeting; 7 p.m., Public Service.

Monday—8.15 p.m., Literary Society (Oct.—March).

**Thursday*—8 p.m., Public Service; 9 p.m., Choir Practice.

Thursday—3 p.m., Young Ladies' Bible Reading.

Friday—8.15 p.m., Christian Endeavour Society.

Monthly Meetings in Church or Lecture Hall.

Last Tuesday of Month—Foreign Missionary Association.

**First Thursday*—9 p.m., Deacons' Court.

**Last Thursday*—9 p.m., Session.

Third Thursday—12 noon, Missionary Prayer Meeting.

First Friday—6 p.m., Mission Band.

Second Friday—11 a.m., Ladies' Benevolent Association.

Last Friday—8 p.m., Prayer Meeting and Conference.

Weekly Meetings in * * * * * Hall.

Sunday—3 p.m., Sunday School; 8.15 p.m., Evangelistic Service.

Monday—2.30 p.m., Mothers' Meeting.

Tuesday—7 p.m., Band of Hope; 8 p.m., Temperance Meeting.

Wednesday—8 p.m., Service for the People.

Thursday—3 p.m., Prayer Meeting (in Upper Vestry).

Weekly Meetings in * * * * * Board School.

Sunday—9.45 a.m., Sunday School; 3 p.m., Sunday School; 7 p.m., Children's Service.

Office-Bearers.

MINISTER—Rev. * * * * *.

ELDERS, eleven; DEACONS, six.

Officials of Session and Deacons' Court.

SESSION CLERK.

CLERK OF DEACONS' COURT.

GENERAL CONGREGATIONAL TREASURER.

TREASURER FOR SUSTENTATION FUND.

TREASURER FOR PEW RENTS.

TREASURER FOR CHURCH SCHEMES.

TREASURER FOR * * * * * HALL.

EDITOR OF "MESSENGER" SUPPLEMENT.

ORGANIST.

LONDON CITY MISSIONARY.

CHURCH OFFICER.

* After April 30th these Meetings will be held as previously on Wednesday instead of Thursday evening.

Standing Committees of Deacons' Court.

Elected annually in December.

Each composed of Convener, one or more Elders, and one or more Deacons.

CHURCH BUILDINGS COMMITTEE [five];	CHURCH SCHEMES' COMMITTEE [four];
CHURCH ARRANGEMENTS COM- MITTEE [five];	COMMUNION FUND COMMITTEE [five];
SEAT-LETTING COMMITTEE [four];	CHURCH PRAISE COMMITTEE [six];
SUSTENTATION FUND COMMITTEE [four];	FINANCE COMMITTEE [six];
	* * * * HALL COMMITTEE [five] — (From Church Year Book.)

2. EXTRACTS FROM SESSIONS' REPORTS

(a) During this period (*i.e.*, the sixty years of Her Majesty's reign) there has been a wonderful awakening of the Churches, and through them the conscience of the nation, to their responsibilities to the people, and especially the poorer classes of the population constantly increasing around us. Differences remain between Churches and parties in the State, but all have been united, whether as Christians or citizens, to redeem past negligences and forward every enterprise to remove ignorance, disease and poverty.

Although the work seems to expand the more we survey it, yet the record of these past years is well calculated to inspire us to increased and sustained efforts in the years to come. So various are the necessities and conditions to be met that our agencies increase at all the centres of work. As the Church is the main stem of all these branches of work, success depends (under the Divine aid) on the energy and sympathy of the members and the inspiration that accompanies the ministry of the Word amongst us. At no time in the history of our Church have all the conditions of a successful pastorate been more evident, and at no time have our Christian agencies been in a more healthy state than now.—(*From an Annual Report.*)

(b) Having laid before you the principal outstanding facts connected with the congregation during the past year, the Sessions are very thankful that the retrospect, has confirmed the correctness of their expectation expressed a year ago, as far at least as regards numerical

revival; the membership has increased, and the attendance at the observance of the Lord's Supper has increased. The Sessions are aware that these and other signs of advancement do not necessarily include or accompany spiritual development, but they know that there exists in our midst a spirit of loyalty and devotion to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and to His cause, which cannot but tend for good in the future of this congregation. The Sessions desire, in humble dependence on Divine aid, to foster this spirit by every means in their power, and to this end they ask your earnest and constant prayers that the preaching of the Gospel, which is so faithfully proclaimed from the pulpit of this church from Sabbath to Sabbath, may be owned and blessed by the Divine spirit to the saving of many souls, and the up-building and establishing of believers in their most holy faith, and may the Lord grant that this Church may be a great spiritual force, having in the heart of it the hastening of His Kingdom.—(*From the Report of a middle-class Church.*)

(c) The success of a congregation, in the best sense, depends as much upon well filled pews as upon an ably filled pulpit. We have the latter; let us also have the former.

The desirability of holding a series of special Evangelistic services in the church has several times been discussed by the Session, but up to the present time difficulties have presented themselves which the Session have been unable to overcome. The matter will not be lost sight of, should favourable circumstances and a suitable evangelist present themselves. They feel, however, that the stated ordinances of the Lord's house, and the consecration of the members of the church to His service, are more to be relied on for the advancement of His Kingdom than any special efforts, which are mainly attended by Christian people, and are often transitory and evanescent in their results. The chief object of special services is to draw in those who are outside the pale of the Christian Church, and the Session feel that if each member of this congregation were to make it his or her business, as it undoubtedly is their privilege, to invite those among whom they reside and who are known not to attend any place of worship, to come with them to this house of God, where the Gospel

is preached in all its pureness and simplicity, the results would be far beyond any that have been recorded from special services which have been held in the past.—(*From the Report of a middle-class Church.*)

(d) The key-note must be one of praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for the measure of blessing and success which has followed the faithful and zealous labours of our beloved minister and the united efforts of the office-bearers and workers. This has been seen in their earnest endeavour to extend the cause and kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the neighborhood where our lot is cast.

We have great reason to praise God for the wondrous way in which He has led us and blessed us during the past twenty-two years of our history as a Church and of our pastor's ministry among us; and now let us pray that we may all be filled afresh with the Holy Ghost, so that this coming year may find us giving even more time and means to advance the prosperity of the Church we love, and thus helping forward even more earnestly the cause of our Blessed Redeemer.

Let us also remember our minister's motto for this new year—"Have faith in God," and let us, moreover, put these words of Jesus into practice in all our efforts to win souls and to glorify Him. Then His pillar of cloud will still be with us, in guiding, protecting and prospering all the agencies of the Church and all the activities of the congregation.—(*From the Report of a working-class Church.*)

3. PASTOR AND PEOPLE

(a) *Extracts from a minister's notes on the report, in the form of a letter to his people, mainly of congratulation.*

Our annual report will amply repay study; it witnesses to continued progress—spiritual, numerical, financial. We have applied the pruning-knife severely to our roll of membership, and yet it shows very gratifying growth; the generosity of past years is more than maintained, and the audiences on the Sabbath are as large as ever. To those, who desire more fruit, we would say, good trees first make wood, and our roots are healthy and strong.

There is nothing more noteworthy than the decided improvement in the missionary spirit of the congregation, a spirit which the Missionary Association, through its committee with its two energetic secretaries, has studiously fostered. For myself, I am bound to say that the work involved in preparing addresses of a purely mission character has its own reward. As I have grown in knowledge of mission work, I can honestly testify that I have had my sympathies with it greatly enlarged.

New and old undertakings.

We seem to have a rare faculty, not only of initiating new and much-needed enterprises, but also of so planting them in the soil of opportunity that their success is assured from the first day.

The work of the Spirit.

Others will speak of finance; I am compelled by a gracious necessity to speak of the work of the Spirit. Especially during the past year I have been blessed with the confidence of many, have been favoured in oral and written communications, with records of re-birth, growth, rich experiences, the power of the Word, the leavening of Christian influences. The river whose "streams make glad the City of God" has broadened and deepened; the snows of Lebanon have melted and have added to its volume. "God has made us exceeding glad with His countenance" Many a glorious conference I have had in private with souls inquiring the way to God. The people have either become more appreciative, or I have been better guided in my utterances, or both. I desire particularly to emphasize the fact, that I have been cheered more than ever in my life, with letters full of gratitude for the helping and soothing Word. Perhaps it is the Lord's reward for keeping the one Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, ever before the people, and between them and me.

(b) Circular letter from a Presbyterian minister.

DEAR FRIEND,—Of the many facts which cause us grave anxiety, the saddest is the open neglect of the Lord's Day. There is a disposition to treat it as the holiday of the week, a day for public meeting and carnival.

To judge by conduct, we might conclude men had lost faith in God, and Atheism was rampant. Personal religion is the foundation of self-respect. Reverence for God is the spring of reverence for man. If a person openly neglects the Lord's house and Divine worship, I am not surprised whatever happens. He has lost the keystone of character, and he will break up. Religion is the secret source of brotherhood, philanthropy, and progress. If you give up your public religious life, there will not be much left.

Yours sincerely, "

* * * * *

(c) *Extract from letter prefixed to the annual report.*

We are united as a part of Christ's Holy Church, as members of the Presbyterian Church of England, in a sanctuary of many sacred memories, which, at the least, we ought not to shame; and, above all, we are united as personal believers in the Lord Jesus, whose solemn duty it is to lead others to His truth, and to aid one another in the way of righteousness. There is a great trust in which the humblest among us can bear their part—a trust, indeed, which none of us dare refuse. I earnestly plead, therefore, for the more intelligent and sympathetic knowledge of our work which this handbook can supply. And as the outcome of this, and of an ever deepening spiritual life, I pray and look for a real and individual sense of responsibility, and for such loyal and unflagging service on your part in the kingdom of God, as shall not weary nor slacken until the Master calls you to His rest, or the world is won for Christ.

§ 6

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, UNITARIANS, AND OTHERS

I. SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Aims and Methods of Adult Schools.

The name "Adult School" does not quite explain itself. Some think it refers to a purely educational institution for working men, not understanding the essentially religious character of the schools. Others fancy that it is only a new kind of Bible class. Now, though adult schools are too full of life and growth to be capable of exact definition, they are much more than either simple educational or Bible classes. We shall not be far wrong in describing them as co-operative religious societies, carried on and controlled by their own members.

This is an age of co-operation. The principle underlies trades unions, co-operative stores, sick benefit clubs, benefit building societies, mutual assurance societies, and many other modern institutions. Christian co-operation is known to us under its beautiful name of Brotherhood. True brotherhood, in all that it means of love and help and of independent and yet harmonious working together for great ends, is the noblest as it is the simplest basis for practical Christian work.

In some of the thickly peopled districts of London or in the great manufacturing towns of the Midlands or the North you may learn, by a personal visit, something of the spiritual power and practical help which centres in an adult school. The men who crowd the classes spend their lives in toil and daily care. They come because they love the school; because it gives them a lift up for the week; because they want to help each other on. The school has been the making of them, and they feel that on them depends its success. The warm handshake, the heart sympathy, the willingness to visit and to help one another are the best proofs that the meaning of brotherly love is understood.

And what sort of men does the adult school turn out? Men who have had brought home to their hearts the

direct responsibility involved in our brotherhood to one another will not be idlers. The aims and methods of the school make it a manufactory of Christian workers. God's love is received as a living influence that produces the active energy of loving work for Him. Each one feels his share of responsibility, his share in the work. There is no place for spiritual paupers. The school appeals to the independent minds of our artisans because they feel that it will be what they and their mates make it.

So grand an instrument for social and religious progress and for breaking down the barrier between rich and poor and between class and class needs only to be known in order to be made use of. Earnest minds in all our Churches are longing to find a means for bringing themselves into touch with working men. They know the futility of all attempts which pauperize or patronize, and are beginning to find that an adult school is a platform upon which the principles of Christ can bind together men of all classes and circumstances into a living brotherhood.

The Essential Principles of Success.

What, then, are the essential principles of success? They may be shortly stated as follows:—

1. A spirit of mutual love and sympathy.
2. The school must be an independent institution. Its basis must be unsectarian and it should not be carried on as the branch of any sect or society. Unsectarian premises are preferable but not indispensable, and provided this basis is strictly adhered to there can be little objection to the premises of some particular sect or society being made use of.
3. All sorts and conditions of men should be equally welcome to join the school, without any profession of religious belief being required.
4. The school should be based upon individual responsibility. Every member should have a voice in its management, and should thus feel that he has a part in promoting its welfare.
5. The various branches of the school work should be kept subordinate to its central point—the reverent study of the Bible in a class where every member is free to take part.

6. A portion of the time should be given to writing, &c.
[After the opening of the school, the classes separate for the writing period, which lasts according to circumstances, from twenty minutes to half an hour. It is an essential feature of an adult school.]
7. The school should meet on Sunday at an hour which will not interfere with the services in the neighbouring churches or chapels, opening and closing punctually.
8. The adult classes should be confined to members above a certain age. Seventeen or eighteen is a suitable limit to fix.—(*From a Pamphlet published for the London Adult School Union.*)

2. UNITARIANS

(a) *Services and Meetings.*

* * * * * **Mission and Chapel.**

"For the worship of God and the service of man."

Sunday Services, March, 1899.

Morning Subjects (11 a.m.)—March 5th, "Poetry and Religion." March 12th, "Truth and Error." March 19th, "Idols, New and Old." March 26th, "The Palm-strewn Way."

Evening Subjects (7 p.m.)—March 5th, "A Church for the People." March 12th, "Are we Saved?" March 19th, "A Smithfield Burning." March 26th, "What is Salvation?"

Weekly Calendar.

Sunday—Services, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday School, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.; Minister's Class, 3 p.m., in the Church Parlour; Children's Penny Bank, 2.45 p.m.; Library, 4 p.m.; Teachers' Tea and Conference, Monthly, 4.30 p.m.

Monday—Provident Bank, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Mothers' Meeting, 2.30 to 4 p.m.; Social Literary Union, * * * * * Temperance Society, alternate Mondays, 8.15 p.m.; * * * * * Mutual Benefit Society, monthly, 8 p.m.

Tuesday—Young Women's Club, 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday—Children's Happy Evenings, 6.30 to 8 p.m.; Helpers' Society, 8 to 10 p.m.

Thursday—Boys' Brigade, 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. (Recruit Drill, 7 p.m.).

Friday—Band of Hope, 7 p.m.; Band of Mercy, monthly, 7 p.m.; Church Choir, 8 to 9.30 p.m.; Free Legal Advice (by Lawyers), 8 to 9.30 p.m. (Church Parlour).

Saturday—Ambulance Class (Boys'), 6.30 to 7.30 p.m.; Happy Evenings for Working Men and Women, 8 to 9.45 p.m.

Notices.—The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 21st. Tea at 7 p.m. Chair to be taken at 8 p.m.

Children's Quarterly Service on Easter Sunday morning, April 2nd, at 11 o'clock—"The Spring-time of Life."

This Church is licensed for Marriages.

(b) Principles of Unitarianism.

We hold that there may be union for worship and fellowship without uniformity in theological belief.

We strive to apply this principle constantly in our whole Church system and congregational life.

There is no authority amongst us empowered to prescribe what belief shall be held either by ministers or people.

Full membership may be enjoyed without participation in any special rite either on entrance or afterwards.

Our Church is an open society for free and unfettered thought, and for mutual help and stimulus in religion.

We keep no reserve in speaking what we believe to be true concerning religious questions, but we think less of particular opinions upon these subjects than of the spirit and temper in which they are approached.

Any who are in sympathy with these principles of worship and congregational union are invited to join us.—
(*From a Chapel Leaflet.*)

3. ETHICAL RELIGION

* * * * * Ethical Society.

Object of the Society.

"The object of the Society is the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment, the study of ethical principles, and the promotion of human welfare, in harmony with advancing knowledge."

FEBRUARY, 1903.

The following Discourses will be delivered on Sunday morning, Service beginning at 11.15.

February 1st—"The History of Spiritualism." Anthems: 1. "Wake! for the Sun has scattered into flight" (Persian Garden) (*Lehmann*); 2. "Rise! for the day is passing" (*Addison*). Hymns: No. 93. "All before us lies the way"; No. 11. "How happy is he born and taught."

February 8th—"The Dangers of a State Ethical Church." Anthems: 1. "Never from lips of cunning fell" (No. 221) (*Trousselle*); 2. "One morn at gate of Eden" (Paradise and the Peri) (*Schumann*). Hymns: No. 86. "The place of worship is not bound"; No. 123. "There is no wind but soweth seeds."

February 15th—"In Tune with the Infinite." Anthems: 1. "Benedictus qui venit" (*Weber*); 2. "My hope is in the everlasting" (Daughter of Jairus) (*Stainer*). Hymns: No. 52. "Ope, ope, my soul"; No. 103. "I hear it often in the dark."

February 22nd—"The Mystery of Evil." Anthems: 1. "O Salutaris hostia" (Coronation Mass) (*Cherubini*); 2. "The Asra" (*Rubinstein*). Hymns: No. 40. "Sow in the morn thy seed"; No. 92. "Oh sometimes glimpses on my sight."

Sunday School—The children meet in the chapel every Sunday morning, at 11.15, and their lesson is given in the class-room during the discourse. Members and friends wishing their children to attend the school are requested to communicate with the Superintendent.

February 1st. Mr. * * * * * "Living London."

" 8th. Mrs. * * * * *

" 15th. Miss * * * * * "The Brownies."

" 22nd. Mr. * * * * * "The Hand."

Visitors bringing children to the Sunday morning services are cordially invited to allow them to attend the children's lesson.

The chapel is licensed for Marriages.

Arrangements can be made for the conduct of Funeral Services on application to the Secretary.

Membership—"Persons paying for sittings in the Society's place of meeting for the time being are thereby constituted members of the Society. Members who are twenty-one years of age and upwards, whose names have been twelve months upon the register, and whose subscriptions for the previous quarter have been paid, shall be qualified to vote and to hold office."—*Extract from the Rules.*

Associates—Persons residing at a distance, and who are unable to attend the services regularly, may become Associates of the Society upon payment of an annual subscription of 5s, with the privilege of receiving all the current publications of the Society.

Sunday Afternoon Free Lectures—The course of lectures on "the Political Systems of the World" will be continued as follows:—

February 1st. "Afghanistan" (with lantern illustrations).

" 8th. "Bulgaria."

" 15th. "Paraguay" (with lantern illustrations).

" 22nd. "Montenegro."

An Organ Recital will be given each afternoon, from 3.30 to 4 o'clock. All seats free, no collection. Doors open at 3.30, lecture at 4 o'clock.

Tuesday Evening Lectures—A course of five lectures on "France and French Literature" is being arranged. The first lecture will be given on Tuesday, February 24th, 7.30 p.m. Subject: "Joan of Arc and the Valley of the Loire."

The lectures on March 3rd and 10th will be on French Literature. Admission free.

Discussion Society—Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday in each month:

February 11th. Subject: "Tolstoy's Religion."

Monthly Soirées—The next Soirée will be held on February 2nd Tickets, 6d each.

Sunday Popular Concerts—The Seventeenth Season will be continued every Sunday evening until further notice.

[These concerts are mainly instrumental and attract crowded audiences. The programme for the month includes selections from Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Brahms, Wagner, &c. Admission is free, with collection.]

Orchestral Society—The Sixth Season will be continued on Friday evenings, when practices are held from 7.45 to 9.45.

Lending Library—The Lending Library is open free to members of the Society and season-ticket holders on Sunday mornings before and after the services. Associates and non-members of the Society may under certain conditions be granted the use of the Library. Subscriptions towards the purchase and repair of books are invited. [Leaflet.]

4. ENGLISH POSITIVIST COMMITTEE

I. The following were the special commemorations for the year:—

January 1. "The Day of Humanity."

September 5th. "Anniversary of Auguste Comte."

December 31st. "Day of all the Dead."

The meetings and addresses have been continued on Sunday, as follows:—

January. "The British Empire."

January 6th. "The Meaning of Empire."

" 13th. "Canada and Australia."

" 20th. "India."

" 27th. "South Africa."

February. "Some Great Teachers of the Nineteenth Century, and their contributions to the Religion of Humanity."

February 3rd. "Goethe."

" 10th. "Carlyle."

" 17th. "Tolstoi."

" 24th. "Comte."

March 3rd, 10th. "The Fundamental Facts of Positivism."

March 17th, 24th. "Science in the Nineteenth Century."

March 31st. "Social Peace."

Eight Sundays in October and November.—"Social, Political, and Religious Problems of the Day."

December 1st.—"Tycho Brahé, and Early Astronomy."

December 8th, 15th.—"The History of Sociology and Morals."

December 22nd.—"Conference of Positivist and Ethical Societies."

II. During the summer months, Pilgrimages were made to historic scenes and collections; and addresses given.

III. The Positivist Society has met on the last Friday of each month except December. The following are the subjects discussed:—

January 25th.—"English Positivist Organization."

February 22nd.—"The Crown."

March 29th.—"Moral Instruction in Schools."

April 26th.—"The French Associations Bill."

May 31st.—"Farm Burnings and Press Prosecutions in South Africa."

June 28th.—"Russia."

July 26th.—"The Housing Question."

August 30th.—"Pro-Boers and Imperialists."

September 27th.—"The Relations of Positivists with Christians, Freethinkers, and Socialists."

October 25th.—"Recent Trade-Union Questions."

November 29th.—"Positivist Organization."

IV. Social meetings with tea and music were held on the second Monday in each month (except during the summer). On Sunday, December 22nd, invitations were issued to and were accepted by seven Ethical Societies, and a discussion was held upon the use of ceremonies by Positivist and Ethical associations.

The Women's Guild has held as usual its social meetings, club nights, debates, and flower meeting.

The Positivist Library is now open, and may be referred to and books borrowed on application to the Librarian.

It is one of the cardinal principles of the Positivist Movement to make all religious and public teaching gratuitous, to offer education to all who choose to accept it, and to substitute social for personal motives throughout the whole sphere of education.—(*From Report for 1901.*)

§ 7

NONCONFORMIST JOINT ACTION

(a) Free Church Councils : An Invitation.

The following invitation was issued on behalf of a Council that had as president a minister of somewhat exceptional liberality and enlightenment of view, and is signed by him. The list of Churches uniting in the invitation comprised Congregationalists (14), Baptists (8), Wesleyans (4), Primitive Methodists (4), Presbyterians (2), United Methodists (1), Methodist New Connexion (1), and Society of Friends (1):—

DEAR FRIEND,—If you are not already in the habit of attending a place of worship, we give you a hearty invitation to the services at any one of the * * * * * Free Churches named in the list on the other side.

Many of these Churches have recently formed themselves into a Council for mutual fellowship and united work, and one of their first acts is to offer a hearty welcome to any of their neighbours who are not associated with any Church. We have found for ourselves the greatest help and inspiration for life in the public worship of God, and we earnestly desire that others should share with us that which we have found of so great value. We have fixed upon Sunday, 10th October, as a day upon which we should unitedly present this hearty invitation to all our neighbours, and we assure you of a sincere welcome at any of our services on that day.

Many whom this invitation will reach were once in the habit of attending public worship, but have allowed the habit to cease: in their case we appeal to old and sacred memories. Many have children whom they love, and for whom they desire to do the best they can: to them the religious life which is associated with the worship of God offers the greatest possible help. All have sins and wants and duties, in the midst of which there is continual need of Divine pity and strength, and our only desire is to help others to realize in the Christian Faith that which we have found so full of comfort and inspiration to ourselves.

We therefore earnestly and affectionately invite you to be with us at one or both services on Sunday, 10th October, and assure you of a hearty welcome from the entire congregation represented.

On behalf of the * * * * * Free Church Council,
* * * * *, *President.*

(b) Simultaneous Free Church Mission.

The mission to which the following circular letter refers was held early in 1901, first for ten days in London, and afterwards in the provinces.

National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches.

SIMULTANEOUS MISSION, 1901.

The Committee of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, at its last meeting of the Century, reaffirms its profound

conviction that the Churches have been impelled by the Divine Spirit to seek that full union and co-operation which the Council was called into being to promote; and expresses its heartfelt gratitude for the guidance of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in what the Council has been enabled to do.

The Committee is impressed with the solemnity of the work which lies before the Council in the Twentieth Century Simultaneous Mission, and sends an affectionate greeting to the Churches which are taking part in it.

The Mission is intended to be a great effort to bring home the reality of the Gospel to the multitude of the English people, for whose salvation God is putting an urgent desire into His servants' hearts.

Pre-eminently the Mission must be a preaching of the Gospel.

The doctrine of the Deity of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, involves both His divine authority to forgive sins, and His divine grace in saving; and the faith of this will make the efforts of the Churches powerful and tender.

The greatness of Christ's sacrifice, and the reality of His atonement for the sins of the whole world, will prove again an appeal to which the hearts and consciences of quickened sinners will respond.

The Committee recalls the fact that habitual reliance on the inspiration and help of the Holy Spirit was a conspicuous note of the Evangelical Revival of the 18th Century; and feels earnestly the need of the same reliance on the part of the Churches engaging in the mission. The wisdom and tenderness and faith which are required to deal with human souls in all varieties of spiritual want, can only be supplied by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, whom the living Lord of the Churches still sends forth to inspire and sustain His people, as well as to convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment.

It is with a full heart that the Committee thus addresses the Federated Churches. It commends them affectionately to God for the supply of all their needs; and urges them to pray much for themselves and for one another, that larger blessings than we can ask or think may result from their simultaneous endeavour.

Signed by authority of the Committee, given December 3rd, 1900:—

CHARLES H. KELLY, *President*.

A. MACKENNAL, *Ex-President*.

H. PRICE HUGHES, } *Past Presidents.*

JOHN CLIFFORD, }

J. MONRO GIBSON, *Hon. Secretary*.

THOMAS LAW, *Organizing Secretary*.

MEMORIAL HALL, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

(c) The following "Questions and answers respecting the forthcoming Simultaneous Mission" are taken from a leaflet issued by three churches belonging to a London Free Church Council:—

Q.—What is this coming mission?

A.—It is a special effort on the part of all the Free Churches of London to promote the Kingdom of our Lord in London.

Q.—Do all the Free Churches unite?

A.—Yes, all the Free Churches associated with the Free Church Council of London, including Congregationalists, Baptists, Friends, Wesleyans, Primitive and other Methodists and Presbyterians.

Q.—But what about our *local* part of the great mission?

A.—The three churches, * * * * * (Baptist), * * * * * (Presbyterian), and * * * * * (Congregational) are all joining together in one great united effort to bring the gospel blessing home to their neighbours and friends.

Q.—Where will the united meetings be held?

A.—They will be held in the Congregational Church.

Q.—But is the Mission a Congregational Mission?

A.—No, not at all, but a United Free Church Mission.

Q.—Who is to be the *Missioner*?

A.—* * * * * from * * * * *, an honoured minister of the Moravian Church in that town.

Q.—Then he is not a Baptist, nor a Presbyterian, nor a Congregationalist?

A.—No, but a Moravian. He loves and serves the same Lord as we do, has the same Gospel to preach that all believe.

Q.—But is it not strange—this mixing up of denominations?

A.—Yes, but we are getting to see that while there is nothing to keep us apart, there are many things to unite us all together as brethren in the Lord.

Q.—Surely, then, this is a good sign, is it not—to see Christians coming closer together?

A.—Yes, a very hopeful sign—one full of promise of great blessing to all our Churches. There is no longer any competition between our Churches, but heartiest co-operation in the work of Christ.

Q.—Is not this mission *something new*?

A.—Yes, never in all their history have the Free Churches joined before in this manner.

Q.—What results do you expect?

A.—We dare not expect small results. That would not be God's way. He is waiting to give us large things. Christians will be revived, led into larger truth, raised into holier experience. Backsliders will be brought back. The cold and indifferent will be warmed into interest. *Sinners will be saved.*

(d) Results.

Our mission at * * * * * is just over, to my own intense regret, and, apparently, to the regret of everybody else who has had anything to do with it. The outstanding impression upon all our minds is that the mission has been far too short. It is impossible to touch a neighbourhood like * * * * * in the limited space of ten days. Oh, if we could have had a further ten days! This is our chief impression.

Now as to what has been accomplished. The week-night congregations have been large, but by no means overflowing. Sunday night we were full enough. More than one hundred people have taken resolution papers; a number have been into the inquiry room, and I have received a number of letters from people who profess to have obtained spiritual awakening. Church

members, too, seem to have been considerably blessed. It is always difficult to speak of spiritual results but I think I may say we have had at * * * * * considerable blessing.

Now as to what has *not* been accomplished. We have scarcely touched the "outsiders." Very few, genuine non-church-goers have visited us. Had the mission continued longer I think we might have reached some of them. Things were in a glow on Monday evening when we had to close, and our congregation was ready to do anything. I am absolutely convinced of the necessity for MORE TIME in a mission.

But we must yet solemnly face this grave question—How is it that with all our efforts we cannot reach the "outsiders" in any considerable numbers? We have all wondered (so far as * * * * * is concerned) whether the fact of the meetings being held in a highly respectable, beautifully upholstered * * * * * church had the effect of frightening away non-church-goers! Had a town hall or a theatre been available many of us would have voted for *that* in preference to a church. I hate to write this, for it sounds like treason; but if the people will not come to churches what are we to do?—(*A Missioner's Impressions. From the "Christian World."*)

CHAPTER V

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

§ 1

ASPECTS OF CATHOLICISM IN LONDON

IN London the Roman Catholic Church meets us at many points and in very different shapes, and in watching its methods we become conscious of the persistency and concentration displayed, and of the remarkable powers of adaptation characteristic of this body. Their exercise extends from high statecraft, through the whole range of appeal to intellect and emotion which constitutes 'the propaganda' in England, down to every form of guidance and control that can be exercised in the interest of religion upon men and women of all conditions, the whole system being carried to a degree of perfection and stamped with a thoroughness which make all the Protestant methods seem pinchbeck in comparison.

Of the extent and degree of the power of this Church over her own people there can be no question. There is much less nominal adhesion among the Catholics than among the Protestants. The same may doubtless be said if we compare Protestant Nonconformity with the Establishment, for it must nearly always be the case that the State Church in any country will contain the largest proportion of those who attend for form's sake

and are at heart indifferent. But the solidity of the Roman Catholic Church here not only exceeds, but is different in kind from that of the Protestant Churches, being based on the exceptional powers vested in the priesthood, and confidently exercised by them, with the result that their influence in their own sphere, whether for good or evil, is much greater than that of the clergy or ministers of any Protestant community in theirs.

Numerically the Roman Catholic Church in London is not important. Even in the aggregate the numbers involved are not large, and, if we exclude the Irish and those of foreign blood, are surprisingly small. But in order to deal with the various shapes which the influence of their religion assumes, I shall have to break the subject up and consider the action of the Church in relation to each class of its people.

Those whom the different aspects of the action of the Church concern are: the poor Irish, who are naturally devout; the poor Italians, who are ignorant, superstitious and, for the most part, pious, though a few are anarchical and anti-papal; French and Italians of better position, concentrated in Central London, upon whom their religion sits very lightly; and a certain number of Germans, who are good Catholics, scattered all over London; then, English Catholic families of middle and lower-middle class settled in London, or individual Catholics whose work has brought them here, also very widely distributed; converts drawn from these classes; the representatives of the old Catholic families, with other people of rank, wealth, or fashion; and, finally, converts of this last class. These together form the material upon which the Catholic Mission Churches work; while, in addition to the churches, there is a great number of conventual and other Catholic institutions

in or near London playing an important part in various ways.*

When we speak of the Irish in London we include those of Irish blood born out of Ireland: be it in London or elsewhere. The pressure of poverty and want has made these poor people movable, but they are very gregarious, and wherever the unskilled labour, which is what they have to offer, is in demand, they readily form new communities.

They are, with few exceptions, Catholics, and are generally attached to their religion; are almost invariably submissive to its authority when that authority can be exerted, and in whatever locality they settle themselves a mission church is forthwith established. For the buildings money is obtained from outside, collected as required from wealthy Catholics, and is very carefully spent. No buildings in London devoted to religious purposes are more fully used. The priests are accommodated at the presbytery, and receive a small allowance for expenses; the Sisters from some neighbouring convent take charge of the girls' school or help to visit the sick, and if charitable relief is needed for those in distress special assistance is forthcoming; but the necessary expenses of church and schools, apart from Government grants to the latter, are defrayed from the offerings of the congregation.

The priests live as poor men among the poor. Their food is simple, their clothes are threadbare; they take few holidays. They live from day to day—if they have a shilling in their pocket no one in want will ask in vain. Abstemious and self-restrained themselves, they are yet lenient judges of the frailties that are not sins, and of the disorder that is not crime. This kindly gentleness is after the event; at the time no one could be

* In order to avoid raising any question on the right to the title 'Catholic,' I have, when it seemed requisite, prefixed the qualification 'Roman'; but in other places the word is used in the conventional and, I think, more convenient way.

more uncompromising in denunciation or more prompt in interference.* It is said that the voice of the priest or the presence of the Sister will quell any disorder; but the trouble recurs. I do not go so far as to say that the same quarrel breaks out again so soon as priest or Sister has gone, but it may be so; at any rate the occasions repeat themselves. Savagery is checked, but there is no sign of permanent improvement. Drinking and fighting are the ordinary conditions of life among many of their flock, and the streets in which they dwell show it.

The care of these rough people, the management of the schools and the services of the church, fully occupy the time of the priests, and there is no thought of propaganda in their work. Every Catholic is supposed to be known. Catholics always know each other, and in this way the priest may hear of newcomers. If strangers from other religious bodies are attracted they come of their own accord, and cannot receive much special attention. But there is a never-ending struggle to prevent lapses among their own people. With them to 'lapse' is to be indifferent, slack, neglectful of religious duties. They rarely deny their own faith or attach themselves to some other, and when confronted by it they still accept the authority of the priest. The tendency to lapse is due to the spirit of the age, which it is impossible that Catholics should entirely escape, and which becomes an especial danger when Catholics are scattered among a non-Catholic population. It is also experienced very generally during the period between boyhood and manhood. In this the Catholics only share the experience of others. Clubs are tried in

* In regard to this, a Congregationalist minister told us that it was in one of these poor Irish quarters that he first realized the power of the Catholic Church. 'The priest,' he reported, 'would not hesitate to go into a public-house, lug a man out by the scruff of the neck, and cane him in the street.' 'The Romans,' he added, 'are a real influence for good amongst the lowest class.'

order to retain the lads, but without much success, and the best hope is to catch the young men again a few years later when they marry. It is in connection with this that mixed marriages are regarded as so great a danger. If a young man who is by birth a Catholic marries a Catholic girl, he and she and their children are comparatively safe. At every important epoch in their lives the priest enters, and the Church plays a strong part. But should this young man who has slipped out of the fold marry a Protestant, he will almost surely be confirmed in indifference, and very likely be lost sight of altogether. So, too, a young Catholic woman who marries out of the fold, unless her faith is strong, is likely to pass into indifference, even if she do not drift into some other community. When such marriages cannot be avoided, every possible advantage is taken, and every use made of the powers and prerogatives of the Church, and of the opportunities which the occasion offers ; but even so the chances of loss, with the tendency of the age towards indifference thrown into the scale, are held by most to outweigh the gains that may come when the Catholic element in a mixed marriage proves the stronger, and is thus able to win over the Protestant husband or wife and assure to the Church the education of the children.

The fact that the Irish generally marry amongst themselves, and that most Irish are Roman Catholics, minimizes the danger of mixed marriages among them, and their tendency to congregate in colonies also facilitates the work of the priests. There are, however, still many complaints of indifference and lapsing. The Catholic standard as to the performance of religious duty is high, but even with them we hear in some quarters that among the poor 'one third do, another third can't, and the remaining third won't, attend Mass ;' those who 'can't' being men working on Sunday morning, or women detained by household

duties, and those prevented by illness or physical disability of some kind.

The poor Italians (like the Irish) cling together. With the exception of those who act 'padrone' and arrange everything for their compatriots, they speak very little English. They never break with their native land. Some travel back and forth every year, avoiding our cold winter, and all look forward to their ultimate return to Italy. They appear to be abjectly poor, and are probably oppressed by their padrone, but they are accustomed to meagre fare, are extremely frugal and thrifty, and probably save money. Such are those who form the staple of the poor Italian congregations of the Catholic Church in London. The principal colony, as has been described in a previous volume, is in the neighbourhood of Saffron Hill, and there and elsewhere their religious needs are cared for by a number of Italian-speaking priests.

These people are more difficult to reach and to hold in religion than the Irish, with whom religion and nationality go hand in hand. As a rule the better Catholic the better Irishman, and the better Irishman the better Catholic: their priests, being often of Irish blood, are at one with the people, and in sentiment are even more Irish than they are Catholic. Amongst the Irish, rebellious blood turns not against both Church and State as in Italy, but against the State alone. With the poor Irish the police are recognised enemies, against whom the whole street is ready to unite. If in some domestic quarrel the priest interferes, they submit; but let a policeman attempt it, and he may be kicked to death. Quarrelsome and violent, unrestrained as children, and brutal when their passions are loosed, they are yet full of natural piety, and the priests who live with them, and love them 'can find no harm in them.'

Religious feeling lies very deep in the Irish

character, and contains a singularly small infusion of superstition. The Catholic Church understands, as no other does, how to distil a pure religious essence from the rankest superstition, but with the Irish no such alchemy is required. Among Catholics they are early Christians. They remind one of the Primitive Methodists in their simplicity and their freedom alike from intellectual subtleties, emotional excitement, or the undercurrents of superstition in connection with their faith. It is rather as lingering remnants of black magic that superstition is found among them. Roman Catholic religious miracles, which are daily bread in Italy, and a quite inevitable outcome of the present pressure of emotion in France, which are hoped for in America, and might happen at any time in England, are unneeded, little thought of, and comparatively unknown in Ireland.

Central London has a large foreign population very variously and not always creditably employed. Although probably baptized into the faith, its members are not, as a rule, good Catholics, and the priests, when they visit, can feel no confidence in claiming them as children of the Church. The priests, like the people, come and go. To provide a service likely to attract strangers, and to meet converts half way; to be accessible if called upon, and ready to visit and relieve their own poor—sums up the possibilities of action open to them. With the foreign population, as with the Irish in London, the Catholics seek no more than to hold their own or regain the lost. Propaganda hardly enters at all.

Like the Italians in Hatton Garden, the French Catholics maintain a church of their own in Soho, and at both the beauty of the services secures a large attendance. •

The scattered German Catholics have a church in Whitechapel, with which is combined a very remark-

able and successful club, as has been described in a former volume.

The extremely scattered character of the Catholic population in most parts of London is indicated by the great size of most of the mission districts, and it must be very difficult for the priests to keep in touch with their flocks. Great efforts, however, are made to maintain the prescribed mission census in which are recorded full particulars of all known Catholic families and individuals so far as they can be traced, and the priests are further helped by the fact that it is the duty of their people to seek them, and in some ways also by the smallness of the total numbers with which they have to deal.

Catholicism never appears to greater advantage than in its relations to its hereditary middle-class members who adhere steadily to their religion, drawing from it good rules of life and spiritual support at all times, and special guidance and help when needed, and in return giving loyal support to the institutions of their Church, in which they feel a natural pride. They may not be the keenest of Catholics, they do not all of them go to confession, nor attend Mass every Sunday ; they perhaps escape supervision by attending occasionally elsewhere than at their mission church ; and they may sometimes even fail to perform their Easter duties. But they have no desire whatever to change the old religion for a new one. They probably fast with habitual regularity, and regard themselves, and may fairly be regarded, as good Catholics. If any of them marry Protestants, the religious position of the Catholic husband or wife, and the future of the children, will be safeguarded as much as is possible, and though some individuals may be lost to the Church, it is perhaps likely that in this class as many will be gained.

Beyond the work involved in ministering to their

own people, some churches with a middle-class *clientèle* engage in active propaganda, and pursue it with such success that converts are even said to form the most regular portion of the congregation. The Church stands always ready to receive; almost, one may say, expectant. Many come out of mere curiosity, but for those who "seek rest," the Church is ever on the watch, and knows how to gather them gently in her arms. Others have already travelled far with the High Church, and have reached the point of asking themselves, 'Why not Rome?' For these I think the door is held less widely open. Some penitence there should be. Let them knock. This is so especially with such as have held Anglican orders and think to join the priesthood of the older Church.

Propagandist work adds interest and excitement to positions that would otherwise be dull and limited in scope, and consequently the minds of the priests belonging to these middle-class churches are very full of it and of the great hopes entertained for the conversion of England.

The reality of the power of the Church of Rome is as remarkable with the cultivated classes as with the rougher, with the educated as well as with the ignorant, with those who have all worldly advantages no less than with those who have none. For poor and rich alike their religion seems to be their greatest possession. True religion, wherever met, brings with it this equality before God. Among those of rank, wealth, and fashion, whether hereditary Catholics or newly won converts, their faith enters into, and I think governs, their lives to a degree rare among Protestants. One cannot mix with them, or enter their places of worship, or talk with the priests and fathers, or have audience of the dignitaries of the Church without being conscious of this. All seem to have a common spirit, all to be working with a common aim; every institution

the Church possesses comes into line, every resource is brought into play. To a mere onlooker it is interesting, to the actors it must be intensely so. In this upper section of Catholicism in London the propaganda looms large, and does indeed fill a considerable place in the minds of all, but, so far as the two may be separated, it is as nothing compared to the thought and work given to the general welfare of their people and the organization of their Church.

§ 2

SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE INFLUENCE

The Roman Catholic population of London is estimated by themselves at a little less than two hundred thousand. The estimate is based on the number of baptisms, and a similar result is obtained by taking the usual ratio of population to children of school age, of whom also a fairly correct count can be made. As to two-thirds, the priests have knowledge, and this proportion is as much as can be expected when it is remembered that the Catholics are not one in twenty of the total population, and are spread over nearly one hundred square miles of ground and some thousands of miles of streets. The particulars as to attention and non-attention to religious duties, which are recorded, though regarded as unsatisfactory by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, would not be so regarded by others, and serve to confirm the impressions yielded by my own observations.

To deal with this scattered population, London is divided into about a hundred mission districts. A few of these are worked by communities connected with one or other of the houses of the various religious orders, the members of which are subject to their own superiors, but by far the larger number are in the

hands of mission priests, appointed and removable by the Bishop of their diocese. There are nearly a hundred convents of various descriptions, the inmates of which, in addition to the observance of the more or less exacting rules of their own order for the strengthening of the inner religious life, nearly always either teach, visit the poor, or serve the sick and aged. In some cases they share with the priests in the duty of preparing girls for their first communion, or that of giving the necessary religious instruction to female converts. So, too, the male communities have partly special objects, devotional or otherwise, but in nearly every case, save that of the Jesuits in Farm Street, the responsibilities of a mission district are assumed.

Among the various lay organizations, the most important is the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which is in practice mainly concerned with the administration of charity ; while, connected in many cases with their religious organizations and closely superintended by the priests, there are in London some thirty Roman Catholic Institutions of various kinds dealing with the results of poverty, misfortune, or vice.

But by far the greatest effort is devoted to the elementary schools, in the main with success ; the children being gathered in and their young minds instilled with the principles of their parent Church, to the end that these may be accepted not loosely, as a garment to be cast off at pleasure, but as a natural inheritance never entirely to be lost.

These developments are manifest proofs of vitality and strength. Catholicism in London may be regarded as a single force, and as such stands out as one of the greatest of the religious influences we are studying. Moreover, its doctrines and practices fall in with many of the tendencies of the day, and the Church may very probably grow in strength even if there be no proportionate addition to its numbers, nor any increase

at all in popularity. It has great prescriptive advantages with its own people, and consequently has claims on their loyalty, which enable it to retain their allegiance, but on such new ground as offers is unlikely to go far. Those whose natures are open to find inspiration or repose in the Church of Rome are exceptional in England, and although probably represented proportionately more largely in London than in the Provinces, are everywhere an entirely inconsiderable percentage of the population.

On the value of the religious influence exercised by the Roman Church on its adherents, a word must be said. With regard to our own Reformed Churches, most people are ready to assume that whatever influence they exert is certainly good; regret alone is expressed that so many of those who might come under it are either not touched at all or only nominally affected. But in the case of the Roman Catholic Church few hesitate to ask, Is the influence good, or is it bad? It is right that these questions should be asked. If we do not always ask them, the difference in attitude undoubtedly indicates prejudice, but narrowness of judgment will apply rather to the cases in which the benefits of religious influence are taken for granted than when they are questioned.

In describing the characters of the other religious bodies, whose work we have encountered in London, I have indicated in each case—High, Low, and Broad in the Church of England; Congregationalist, Baptist, or Methodist, among the Nonconformists—what I conceive to be the ‘fault of its quality.’ With the Church of Rome, the ‘quality’ is an extraordinary degree of adaptability, and the corresponding fault, super-subtlety; the leading characteristic is strength of authority, and the inevitable result weakness of individuality. Some such effects must follow when the human conscience is placed in the hands of a priest, and each priest

is a member of a highly organized and powerful hierarchy.

It may be a question how far the different religious bodies produce, or how far only attract, individuals of the type of mind which stands out as characteristic of their adherents. Both processes operate in the same direction, and doubtless both are at work ; so that in every branch of the Christian Church certain qualities are encouraged to the point of exaggeration and loss of balance. In this way mischief arises, and the greater the seeming religious success, the greater the risk of mischief and even of actual failure.

With Catholicism, at any rate, and all the more because of the success that can be claimed, the question of underlying value arises. We are ready to doubt whether the price paid even by the individual soul for its religious endowment is not too high ; and when we go on to measure the influence of this great Church on thought and on education, on social or on political life, hesitation ends. We refuse the proffered blessing and rejoice to feel assured that the conversion of England to Roman Catholicism is a chimerical dream.

It may be very unfair to lay stress on the possible injury to character in the case of this Church, and not in others ; but the fact that most people in England habitually do so, regarding it, moreover, with jealous eyes as something foreign, only strengthens the impression that as a nation we are not likely to become Catholic.

§ 3

OPINIONS EXPRESSED

Although our enquiry met with every kindness from the Roman Catholic clergy, there was in many cases a manifest restraint. This would be no more than a natural result of their side of the position I have

tried to indicate above, but is doubtless due also to the restraint which the discipline of a highly organized Church places upon the expression of individual opinion. The extent to which this reticence gave way in practice evidences the great interest of the subjects broached, while the variety in the views expressed evidences no less the candour of those whose tongues were thus untied.

Speaking of the religious condition of the 'lower reaches' of society in London, one of the priests, whose upbringing and experience fit him to take a large view, said that while outside of Catholicism 'there was absolute paganism,' even within the Church's fold it was 'almost absolute: wilful, bred of indifference which inherited conditions, physical and moral, accentuate.' 'The people, pauperised materially and spiritually, are dead to religion, or have recourse to the Church only at times of crisis and trial, and have no thought of religion at other times. In dealing with them, the great want is social!' Thus, according to this witness, it is folly to offer in the first instance the ministrations of religion, but necessary to begin by forming clubs and such like, approaching by simple, friendly offices the lives of those who are spiritually blind.

Another, who also seems to find greater spiritual destitution among his people than is generally admitted, spoke of them as being 'Catholics, if anything, but uninstructed.' He divides his flock in equal numbers, between good Catholics who need no driving, and those who have practically lapsed, of whom very few would send for the priest even at death; people so low that they were hopeless to reclaim. Begging, accompanied when refused with threats to go elsewhere, is not uncommon among Catholics, and the threats are sometimes carried out; but this witness knew of no wilful attempts by rival Churches to bribe. At his own church there were no regular funds for relief.

Another again speaks in the same sense, of finding his greatest difficulty in the generally prevailing irreligiousness. The environment encourages neglect as the line of least resistance. On Sunday morning, for instance, the whole place is asleep till ten or eleven, the only persons stirring being a few Catholics going to early Mass.

Of those who do not observe their religious duties, it is recognised that the bulk have really lapsed, but, being baptized and married according to the rites of the Church, calling for the priest when sick, and destined to be buried by him, it is held that they may be rightly accounted as remaining in the fold. They are 'all convinced at heart,' says one of the priests; and he emphasizes this opinion by remarking, that those accounted lapsed are the worst of all in sending for the priest at untimely hours. 'Such a call will probably be the first intimation that the man is a Catholic,' and, the sickness over, 'most will lapse again.'

On the other hand, as regards those who come to Mass, 'the charge of coming for what they get is palpably absurd among Catholics; who, even the poorest, are expected to give, and of whom even the roughest are willing to make sacrifices for their Church, to defend it against insult or attack, or to fight for it; the roughest the readiest.' Of this spirit we have given among our illustrations a very forcible picture. Doubtless fighting comes naturally, and may almost be regarded as a recreation among many of these people, so that it would be a pleasure to them to be able to say to their priest (as our story goes), 'Two of us 'ave got him down there by the river, the chap that insulted you, father, and what shall we do wid him?' but devotion to their Church is the underlying spirit.

In dealing with their rough flocks, the priests try

every method. 'Some you must drive, others, lead, and others coax;' and with every class the same ready adjustment of means to end is noticeable. Throughout, great difficulty is found in retaining the boys 'when they become self-conscious,' and it is in connection with this especially that 'social work has immensely increased,' by way of the formation of clubs, brigades, &c. For this the 'non-professional' element is admitted to be the most effective, 'don't be a fool,' for instance, from a layman, going further than priestly admonitions. But this line of action makes the need for 'more workers and more funds' greater even than for more churches.

As to the mass of the population, I quote again from the uncompromising witness first mentioned: 'England,' he says, 'is perhaps christianized in her civilization, but is not Christian. Philanthropy takes the place of religion with the clergy as well as with the laity. Catholics put their religion first. Therein lies their strength.' These views bear on the great question of the hoped-for conversion of England, and on this I will venture to add one or two quotations.

It is admitted by one, that 'the Church of Rome attracts the English more through the senses than the reason;' but it is claimed that 'the forms of her worship bring satisfaction;' and it is pointed out that all the Churches are following the Roman example to some extent. 'The Church of England goes in more and more for ceremony; brightness and variety are also sought by the Nonconformists; everywhere increased attention is paid to music.' And thus, 'worship being increasingly the object of church attendance, the Roman Catholic Church advances in influence.'

Another witness finds 'less division between Catholics and non-Catholics than there used to be,' and by him the belief is expressed that Roman Catholicism will become the prevailing religion, though never perhaps

that of the State; confession and the supremacy of the Pope being everlasting stumbling-blocks in the way of the practical, illogical Englishman.'

The growth of the spirit of organized and ornate worship is noticed by others as well as the Catholics. 'The whole service,' says a Scotch minister, 'must be taken into account.' All now seek the aid of music; not, indeed, in the hallowed form of Gregorians, but on an ascending scale, from the secular adaptations of the Salvationist, through Sankey's thrilling tunes and the admirable part-singing of the Wesleyans, to the careful rendering by trained choirs of some stately anthem; all alike intended first to attract, and then to put the soul in harmony with spiritual things. Architecture also is appealed to. The ideas at least are there, and the words are used; as 'to enter the sanctuary,' 'our beautiful church,' 'a house worthy of God,' and so on. Something more than a mere 'meeting house' is now aimed at by almost all, a building the lines of which shall tend to lift the soul towards God, and there is less terror than formerly of the dangers of symbolism. So, too, with attitude; the numbers of those who prefer to kneel in prayer increase, and even in Baptist churches those now are few who, with unbowed heads, gaze at their leader while he, with uplifted voice and hands, appeals to God on their behalf. The system of closed-in pews begins to shock, and it is unnecessary to be High Church in order to appreciate the encouragement to devotion to be found in plans for seating a congregation copied from the Catholics. In dress, too, those regularly employed on religious work become more punctilious. Ceremonial in all things is every day more popular.

Thus a general drift towards some of the characteristics of Roman Catholicism must be conceded. But when we study the actual facts of conversion, the evidence leans another way. There is no popular

movement in the direction of Rome. The British working man, if he awakes at all from indifference, is hostile; if moved at all spiritually, it is by the simplest Gospel teaching; if intellectually, it is by the Unitarians; but his active interests are much more commonly political and industrial than religious. Converts to Rome are nearly all from the middle or upper classes. Clerks are practically the lowest stratum touched, and the exceptional frame of mind that brings about the change is shown by the extraordinary proportion of clergy among them.

To resume our quotations, we hear, as to converts, that 'They come from the leisured class, or the leisured members of a busy class; others have not time to think about it.' 'We gain in position socially,' says another of those engaged in propagandist work, 'but we do not increase in numbers.' Numerically, it is doubtful whether those gained make good the lapses.

§ 4

ILLUSTRATIONS—ROMAN CATHOLIC

• (EXTRACTS FROM PRINTED MATTER)

(I) *Services.*

(a) **Ordinary Services.**

(St. * * * * * 's Church, * * * * * .)

Sundays—7 a.m., Low Mass; 8 a.m., Low Mass; 9.30 a.m., Military Mass, with Music; Sermon (civilians admitted to aisles). 11 a.m., High Mass (Missa Cantata on ordinary Sundays, High Mass on greater feasts); full Choir and Organ, except in Advent and Lent, when the Singing is unaccompanied; Sermon. Meeting of "St. Vincent de Paul Society" after Mass, in school. 1.30 p.m., Baptisms; 3 p.m., Sunday School. Benediction. 4 p.m., Meeting of "Children of Mary" 2nd and 4th Sunday of month. 6.15 p.m., Rosary. 6.30 p.m., Vespers; Plain Chant Antiphons and Psalms, Harmonised Magnificat; Sermon; English Hymn; Benediction. Meeting of "League of the Cross" after Service in school.

Weekdays—Mass at 7, 8, and 8.30 a.m. Baptisms, Monday, 9.30 a.m.; Friday, 9.30 a.m. Churchings, Monday, 9.30 a.m.; Friday, 9.30 a.m. Confessions, Friday, 6 to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 6 to 9 p.m.; First Thursday of the month, 6 to 9 p.m. Evening Services, Wednesday, at 7 p.m., "Confraternity of the Holy Family;" Benediction; Friday, at 7 p.m., "Confraternity of the Sacred Heart" and "Apostleship of Prayer." Benediction. Meetings, Monday Evening, "Girls' Club," 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., in Girls' School; Monday Evening, "Irish National Foresters," at 8 p.m., in Infants' School; Wednesday Evening, "St. Peter's Orchestral Society," at 8 p.m., in Girls' School.—(*Leaflet.*)

(b) **Ordinary Services during Lent.**

Sundays—Morning, Mass at 7, 8, 9.30, and 11; Afternoon, Baptisms at 1.30; Catechism and Benediction at 3 o'clock; Evening, Vespers, Sermon, and Benediction at 6.30.

Weekdays—Morning, Mass at 7, 8, and 8.30; Baptisms and Churchings on Mondays and Fridays, at 9.30; Evenings, Wednesday, Holy Family Service and Benediction at 7; Friday, Stations of the Cross, Short Instruction on The Commandments of the Church, and Benediction at 7.

Confessions every weekday morning from 7.30 to 9, on Saturday evening from 6 to 9, and on Sunday mornings for those who find very great inconvenience in going at any other time.

The Forty Hours' Prayer will begin after High Mass on the fourth Sunday of Lent, March 25th.

A special hand-bill will be issued for Holy Week.—(*Leaflet.*)

(c) Sermons in Lent.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM.

(St. * * * * * Church, * * * * *.)

LENT, 1900.

Sermons will be preached every Sunday, at the High Mass, at 11 a.m., by the Rev. * * * * *, S.J.

March 4th. 1st Sunday of Lent—The Worth of Man's Soul. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul."—S. Mark viii. 36.

March 11th. 2nd Sunday of Lent—Sin the only Real Evil. "Fear ye not them that kill the body. . . . Fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell."—S. Matthew x. 28.

March 18th. 3rd Sunday of Lent—The Malice of Sin measured by the fall of the Angels. "I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven."—S. Luke x. 18.

March 25th. 4th Sunday of Lent—(Beginning of the forty hours' prayer.) The Malice of Sin measured by the fall of Adam. "Cursed is the earth in thy work; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life."—Genesis iii. 17.

April 1st, Passion Sunday—The Malice of Sin measured by the Eternal Fire of Hell. "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."—S. Matt. xxv. 41.

Good Friday—Special Service at 3 o'clock. The Seven Words of Christ from the pulpit of His Cross. Passion Music by the Choir. [*Leaflet.*]

(d) Holy Week Services.

(St. * * * * * 's, * * * * *.)

Palm Sunday—Morning, Blessing, Distribution, and Procession of Palms, followed by Solemn High Mass, at 11 o'clock. Evening, Vespers at 6.30. Sermon by the Rev. * * * * *, and institution of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Compassion for the Conversion of England; Solemn Benediction.

Wednesday in Holy Week—Evening, Confessions at 6; Office of Tenebræ at 7.

N.B.—Offerings of Candles and Flowers are solicited for the Sepulchre and for the Decoration of the Altar on Easter Sunday.

Maundy Thursday—Morning, Holy Communion every half-hour, from 7 till 10; Solemn High Mass at 10; Evening, Office of Tenebræ at 7.

Good Friday—Morning, Military Service at 9.30; Singing of the Passion, Adoration of the Cross, and High Mass of the Pre-sanctified, at 11.

N.B.—Offering Box at Church Door for the Holy Places of Jerusalem.

Afternoon, Special Service at 3 o'clock. The Seven Words of Christ from the Pulpit of His Cross, by the Rev. * * * * *, S.J. Passion Music by the Choir; Evening, Office of Tenebræ at 7.

Holy Saturday—Morning, at 8, Blessing of Fire, Paschal Candle, and Baptismal Font, followed by Solemn High Mass (Mass begins at about 9.30); Evening, Confessions from 2.30 to 4.30, and from 5.30 till 9.

Easter Sunday—Morning, Masses 7, 8, and 9.30 (Military); at 11, Solemn High Mass (Haydn's Imperial Mass) with Orchestral Accompaniment. Sermon.

N.B.—The Collections at all the Services on Easter Sunday will be for the Clergy of this Church.

Evening, Vespers at 6.30. Sermon by the Rev. * * * * *, S.J. Solemn Benediction.—(*Leaflet.*)

(c) Music for Holy Week, 1900.

Palm Sunday—High Mass at 11 a.m.

Gradual	...	...	...	...	Collegerunt	...	...	Lutz
During the Distribution of Palms	...	...	...	...	Pueri Hebræorum	...	...	Lutz
Procession (going)	...	...	...	...	Occurrunt Turbæ	...	...	Crookall
(in Porch)	...	...	...	...	Gloria Laus	...	...	Plain Chant
(returning)	...	...	...	...	Ingrediente	...	...	Lutz
MASS, Introit...	...	...	...	...	Domine ne longe...	...	...	Plain Chant
„ Kyrie	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Palestrina
„ Passion (Chorus)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Vittoria
„ Credo	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Palestrina
„ Offertory	...	...	...	...	Miserere mei	...	...	Schmidt
„ Sanctus	}	...	...	...	...	...	...	Palestrina
„ Benedictus								
„ Agnus Dei								

Maundy Thursday at 10 a.m.

Mass	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Dudman
Offertory	...	...	...	...	Adoro te devote	...	...	Lutz
Procession to Altar of Repose	...	...	...	...	Pange Lingua	...	...	Plain Chant

Vespers, immediately after Mass, Chanted in Monotone.

Good Friday at 11 a.m.

Passion (Chorus)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Vittoria
During the Adoration of the Cross..	}	...	...	...	Venite Adoremus	...	...	Lutz
„ „ „ „ „ „								
Procession from Altar of Repose...	...	...	...	...	Popule Meus	...	...	Plain Chant
	...	...	...	...	Vexilla Regis	...	...	Plain Chant

Vespers as on Thursday.

At Tenebræ, 3rd Resp., 3rd Noct., "Sepulto Domino,"	by Dr. Crookall.							
Benedictus	...	...	...	...	Plain Chant, arranged by Novello			
Miserere	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Lutz

Easter Sunday at 11 a.m.

Introit and Gradual...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Plain Chant
Mass, with Orchestra	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Haydn's Imperial Mass
Offertory	...	...	...	...	Hæc dies	...	...	Webbe
After the Mass	...	...	...	...	Worthy is the Lamb	...	...	Handel

(2) Fasting.

LENTEN INDULT.

Dispensations granted for the Archdiocese of Westminster, by authority of the Holy See, for the Lent of 1899.

I. FOR THOSE WHO ARE BOUND TO FAST.

1. *Flesh-meat* is allowed at the chief meal, on all days except Wednesdays and Fridays, Ember Saturday, and the last four days of Holy Week.
2. *Eggs* are allowed at the chief meal, on all days except Ash Wednesday and the last three days of Holy Week.
3. *Cheese* is allowed at the chief meal, and also at collation, on all days except Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

4. *Milk* and *butter* are allowed at collation, on all days except Ash Wednesday and Good Friday; and they are allowed at the chief meal on all the days of Lent.
5. *Dripping* and *lard* are allowed at the chief meal, and at collation, on all days except Good Friday.
6. *Suet* is allowed only when meat is allowed.

The milk, butter, cheese, dripping, and lard, which are allowed at collation, are alike classed as *food* in the Papal Rescripts; and they may be taken only in small quantities at the collation, by way of condiment.

On Sundays flesh-meat, eggs, cheese, milk, and butter, may be taken, not only at the chief meal, but also at other times.

II. FOR THOSE WHO, THOUGH NOT BOUND TO FAST, ARE BOUND TO ABSTAIN.

The kinds of food which are allowed at their chief meal, to those who are bound to fast, are allowed at all times to those who are not so bound.

On those days, Sundays included, on which flesh-meat is taken, fish is not allowed at the same meal. This rule applies to all fasting-days throughout the year; and it is binding even upon those who are not bound to fast.

Persons who use these Dispensations are exhorted to put alms into the "Lenten Alms" box, which will be placed in a conspicuous position in every church.

(3) *Rules of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Sorrows.*

I.—To confess and communicate on the day of enrolment, in order to gain the plenary indulgence granted for that occasion.

II.—To say daily seven *Paters* and seven *Aves*, for the intentions of the Confraternity. And once a week the Rosary of the Sorrow. These Prayers can be commuted by the Director of the Confraternity.

III.—To practise some mortification on the vigils of the festivals of Our Lady, and on the Fridays throughout the year.

IV.—To visit the Altar of Our Lady of Sorrows, and to go to Confession and Communion on the two principal feasts of the Sorrows, viz., on the third Sunday in September, and on Friday in Passion Week, and also on the third Sunday in each month.

V.—To pray for the welfare of the Servite Order, of the merits and good works of which they are partakers.

(These rules are not obligatory. Those who omit them only lose the Indulgence attached to them.)

1.—Those wishing to join the Confraternity, but who, from distance, from sickness, or other causes, are unable to attend personally, can be enrolled on sending their name and address, directed to "The Confraternity."

2.—Intentions are recommended to the prayers of the Confraternity on Sunday, Thursday, and Friday evenings.

3.—Mass is offered for the Members of the Confraternity once a quarter.

(4) Prayers are asked (1) For the conversion of the negligent Catholics of St. * * * * * Mission and that our children may be rescued from non-Catholic schools. (2) For the conversion of several Protestants, and the spread of the Faith in St. * * * * * Mission. (3) For the repose of the souls of the deceased members and friends of St. * * * * * Mission and Schools. (4) For the prosperity of St. * * * * * Schools: and for God's blessing on the Mission.—(*From a Mission Magazine.*)

(5) The great feast of the Seven Dolours of our Blessed Lady will be celebrated on Sunday, September 18th. There will be Solemn High Mass in the morning at 11.15, and in the evening at 7, "Stabat Mater," sermon, procession, and benediction. The festival will be preceded by a Septena in honour of Our Lady's Sorrows. From sunset on Saturday, September 17th, to sunset on Sunday, September 18th, the Great Plenary Indulgence, granted by His Holiness Pope Leo XIII., may be gained by all who, on the usual conditions, shall visit the Altar of the Sorrows. This great Indulgence may be gained as often as a distinct visit is made to the Altar during the above stated time.—(*From a Mission Magazine.*)

(6) *An Appeal.*

St. * * * * *'s New Church.

. Only £348. 16s more wanted to complete the building fund. When this amount is paid, the church can be consecrated.

The names of all Benefactors will be placed under the High Altar for a Perpetual Remembrance in Masses and Prayers for Benefactors.

Subscriptions thankfully received by * * * * *

(7) *A Mission Church and its poor.*

We do not rely to any extent on lady visitors amongst our Catholic poor who expect to see the priest often at their homes. They would rather resent the kind advice freely offered by zealous visiting ladies anxious to improve their moral condition and to see that they discharged their religious duties and came to church regularly. But they look for and appreciate the visits of the priest, and are always glad to see him, though he may have nothing

to give except a kind word. When he calls, sitting down amongst them, he at once makes himself at home, listens to all they have to say, and makes inquiries about them all he fully possesses their confidence. . . . Some of these people live in a state of chronic poverty, and it is difficult to know how to help them. But drink has generally something to do with that. Such people never stay very long in any place: they are constantly shifting; they get evicted, their things are put into the streets, but they manage to borrow enough to get a room somewhere near, and get along somehow for a time. . . . Some of our young women are flower-girls or fruit-sellers. . . . Their fathers and brothers, some of them, are hawkers of cheap fruit. . . . A few of the very poorest gain a miserable living by hawking penny toys and novelties. The toys are sometimes made by themselves at home. . . . Others get a living as news-vendors or as porters in the meat market. Most of them, however, are employed in factories or warehouses. . . .

We have a girls' guild to bring together of an evening several times a week for purposes of recreation, the work-girls of the parish. . . . The guild is under the charge of the good nuns, who sit with them, and try to amuse them. . . .

Corresponding to this we have a club for the young men adjoining our schools, where they amuse themselves of an evening during the winter months. I am myself the president of this club. Intoxicating liquors are not allowed, and we do not talk politics. . . . The members of the club, together with those of the guild, all belong to a common confraternity called after S. Joseph, and they meet together in the church on Tuesday evenings for a religious service and instruction given by myself, their president or director. . . .

Then we have for the married women a "mothers' meeting" or Dorcas society, called S. Elizabeth's Society, presided over by Miss * * * * *, a lady who takes great interest in the work. They meet together once a week during the winter months. . . . Some of them are very poor, and the lady who presides over their meetings helps them in many little ways with gifts of tea, sugar, or useful articles of clothing. She gives

them an outing in the country in summer, and at Christmas time, as the result of her begging from the charitable, she is able to provide them with a tea and with a large "bran pie" filled with parcels containing things to wear, everyone being invited to help herself.

Our schools are the special object of our care. We have nearly three hundred children the girls and infants are taught by certificated nuns, the boys by a schoolmaster and assistants the Government grant does not anything like pay for the maintenance Hence the need for voluntary subscriptions. To find the necessary funds we have recourse to various expedients an annual concert a school collector who goes about with his box, which he gets filled with pennies. * * * * *, our collector, has been doing this work for forty-five years. He is a very genial old man of the working class. Everybody in the neighbourhood knows him and loves him. They recognise his pleasant face, his courteous invitation, the rattle of his money-box and his innocent chaff and humbug. And few who know the man can get away from that box without dropping something into it when he pleads for the children.—(*From a printed account by one of the priests.*)

(8) *Story of a Refuge and Home.*

The small Refuge in * * * * * having succeeded better than his most sanguine anticipations, Dr. * * * * * felt encouraged to purchase the large plot of freehold ground on which the present Convent, Refuge, and Home in * * * * * Street stand He deemed it his first duty that a bright and commodious convent should be built for the good Sisters of Mercy who had hitherto ably seconded all his undertakings, and who had exercised, and still exercise, such a kind and beneficent influence on all who come to the Refuge, especially on those whose minds are embittered against religion and society through misfortune. Religion, proved by charity, will always triumph over irreligion. •

There are but few who know the great work performed by the Sisters of Mercy in * * * * * Street.

During the day-time they are employed in teaching more than five hundred poor children; in the evening and on Sunday they devote themselves to the poor in the Refuge and the girls in the Home.

. Dr. * * * * * has managed to pay off the debt incurred. The gigantic total collected by him for the homeless poor, if we include the building fund, has reached considerably more than £50,000. Most of the money has been contributed by generous Catholics and Protestants all over London and in the country, who have given largely to an institution where Protestants, Jews, and Catholics have been received with equal kindness, and without a question being asked as to their religion; where the only requirements for their admission are that they should be poor, homeless, and deserving.

Every Catholic of experience is mindful that nothing so retards the progress of Catholicity as the bigotry to be found among the Protestant working class. All who have been present at the Night Refuge on Christmas Day or Easter Sunday, when the ladies and gentlemen wait upon the poor at dinner, will testify to the deep gratitude of Protestants and Catholics for saving them from starvation, ruin, perhaps the prison or disgrace. Heartily are the cheers, too, given for the kind Sisters who have attended to all their requirements, and made them almost forget the loss of home or fortune. The honoured and devoted hon. secretary, Mr. * * * * *, receives a just portion of their gratitude. Those who have witnessed gratitude like this will testify that the * * * * * Night Refuge and Home has had, and will have, a greater influence in suppressing bigotry than the preaching of the most eloquent, the writing of the most learned, or the repeated assurances of the most popular and respected Catholics.—(*From a report.*)

(9) *A Crusade of Rescue for the Orphans.*

(*Cardinal Vaughan's Appeal.*)

A TWOFOLD WORK NEEDED.

1. I am not one of those who would relieve neglectful parents of their responsibilities because the pinch of poverty or sickness, and a low standard of life charac-

terizes their home. To suffer is the common lot, and negligence can claim no privilege. The main remedy must be found not in breaking up the home, but in raising it by the inculcation of habits of thrift, decency, industry, and good conduct; by visiting and helping to hold the home together as a home, be it ever so humble and dependent.

2. But what in the case where the home has irremediably collapsed?—where the children are orphans, where destitution is seated in her most appalling garb, where vice and crime in human form are embracing young children with both arms? What in the case where tempting invitations place before the starving child the comforts of a warm home and a decent training, to which no drawback is attached, but the *certain loss* of that Catholic faith which is necessary for salvation?

In some of these cases the State, as guardian of society, comes in with ample provision; but in a large number of cases the State and public opinion expect us, and the Church of God bids us, to take up the cause of our own destitute and orphan children ourselves, if we would not be privy to their becoming criminals or apostates. To do this, even at a cost, ought not to be reckoned by a Catholic a burthen, but a privilege, inasmuch as “What ye do to the least of these little ones ye do it unto Me.”

While there is doubtless deep and real piety among the Catholics of London (considerably more than half of those personally known to the clergy annually frequenting the Sacraments), and while the Catholics are almost the only working men who are attached to their religion, we have, on the other hand, an altogether disproportionate residuum of the lowest class. This ought to excite in us extreme compassion, and to spur us to active charity. Cast into a population that has lapsed from Christianity, and has lost all sense of supernatural religion, that is sunk in materialism, and is engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle for existence, it is hardly surprising that a multitude of poverty-stricken Catholics succumb under the deadly poison of the moral atmosphere they are forced to breathe. Though the annual accessions to the Church *ab extra* are to be counted by thousands, our losses

ab intra are not so much like an oozing or trickling out of drops through a leak, as a continuous stream of poor Catholic children born into the great widening English sea of indifferentism and unbelief, or into homes in which their faith is finally wrecked.

It is impossible to estimate with accuracy the number of our losses. Thousands and thousands of Catholic children have been robbed of their faith in past years; they have been emigrated; they have been spirited from one place to another; they have been cut off from all Catholic influence; their very names have been changed; and they have been sent out into the world aliens to the religion of their baptism. The same agencies, and probably the same means, are at work to-day, and our losses continue.

In the present urgent crisis, I ask of you to give three things: money, personal service where needed, and the fire of zeal and charity. All this is necessary. The clergy, few in number, though devoted and self-sacrificing, are quite unequal, alone and unsupported, for the task imposed upon the Church by the conditions of this modern Babylon. The good and zealous laity, men and women, must be pressed into the service.

The paucity of printed matter concerning the work of the Roman Catholic Churches in London is very noticeable when compared with that available for other religious bodies.

CHAPTER VI

MISSIONS

§ 1

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

SINCE the word mission implies a sending, 'mission work' may be regarded as work in which this is in one form or other involved, and 'mission methods' as the methods employed. More loosely we speak of 'mission buildings,' or a 'mission district,' and, again, of 'holding a mission,' by which is meant primarily a series of special services aimed at the conversion of the non-religious. So, too, the Roman Catholic Churches in England are called missions, and the Wesleyans use the term for the centres of work established by them in districts where their regular churches have lost foothold. Individual Nonconformist Churches often maintain missions to the poor in some district chosen for its poverty at a distance perhaps from the parent church; and even if the poor in whom this interest is taken live close by, the work does not lose its missionary character. A special building is usually requisite. The same characteristics are found with the regular parish work of the Established Church among the poor; and 'mission methods' are adopted, with distinct buildings as centres of action. The poor require special treat-

ment, and if not separated by location are set apart by class.

Of the work done by missions connected with the various religious bodies much has already been said, but the number of missions which are not attached to any particular denomination is very great, and among them are found the largest institutions of the kind. They are truly 'missions' as much as any of those established by the Churches. In every case some society or group of individuals, or it may be a single individual, is responsible, and almost all have a definite religious basis. As a result we find London dotted over with buildings devoted to this work. In the poorer parts especially, in almost every street, there is a mission; they are more numerous than schools or churches, and only less numerous than public-houses.

The whole of this work, Church of England, Nonconformist, or unattached, is interwoven with that of the Society known as the 'London City Mission,' the work of which will be more fully described later. The primary object of this remarkable organization is the spread of the Gospel by systematic house to house visitation; but the Society seeks to combine its work as far as possible with that of others in the same field, especially as regards Sunday services, which their own agents by rule never hold in the morning. In the evening, services are held sometimes in halls belonging to the Society, but more often in those of some other Gospel Mission—Church, or Chapel, or Undenominational, as the case may be.

The Sunday schools of the Church of England are sometimes held in mission buildings connected with mission work, and sometimes not; depending partly on position, but mainly on whether there are day schools as well as Sunday schools. If there are day schools belonging to the church the class-rooms serve also on Sunday. But if there is no day school, the buildings, which are

only required for children's classes on Sunday, are available for other purposes during the week, and naturally become the centre of mission work. In them mothers' meetings are held and the Band of Hope assembles for its exercises. For the boys there may be a gymnasium or a club, with sewing, singing, or dancing classes for the girls; while accommodation may be found for much besides, including, not infrequently, meetings of adult thrift or temperance societies.

Many of the existing buildings were constructed for day schools, even where there is now only a Sunday school, and a situation was then chosen as near as possible to the church. But when from the outset a combination of mission and Sunday school is aimed at, the building will most likely be placed in the poorest part of the parish, and those who attend the Sunday school will be exclusively the children of the poor. If the church is some distance away the children seldom if ever come inside it. Instead, special services are held on the mission premises for them, as well as for the neighbouring poor of all ages. Thus the organization of the mission is gradually elaborated as an entity distinct from the church. One of the clergy usually devotes himself especially to it, being assisted in the work by volunteers from the church, and there is often a paid mission woman; while the responsibility for the Sunday services is sometimes shared with the clergy, by a City missionary or Church Army captain.

Large parishes, in addition to schools near the church for weekday and Sunday uses, may have one or more separate mission centres in other parts. In some cases such a centre may grow into a mission church, and may even prepare the way for the formation of a new parish; in other cases development comes on the social rather than the religious side: club rooms perhaps being built, or a coffee-palace established. But such mission work, whether social or religious, for juveniles

or for adults, has to be undertaken by the Church on terms of absolute equality with Nonconformist or unattached missions. With regard to it the parish system has no power or influence, and differences of creed are of little account. The advantage lies simply with the keenest workers or the longest purse.

For the most part, it must be said that these missions in poor neighbourhoods are themselves miserable looking places, and it is to be regretted that they should in so many cases sink in this way to the level of their surroundings. In the poorest and most disreputable streets the poorest and most disreputable building is too often the mission room. A bad example is set. No doubt there is chronic lack of money, but in pleading poverty in order to secure the funds they require they adopt the beggar's *rôle* and feel no shame in their rags. I do not ignore their difficulties. Other claims may seem more pressing, but I am quite convinced that no money could be better spent than in putting and keeping their premises in good order. Missions would be more useful if more respected (too often they are neither), and would be more respected if they showed more self-respect. No retailer's shop would succeed, or deserve to succeed, if it allowed the plaster on its walls to peel and crack ; if it neglected to paint ironwork and woodwork and to keep its windows mended and clean ; and did not seek to show itself and its stock to advantage. Is it to be supposed that missions stand above such considerations ? Homes certainly do not, for bright windows, clean curtains, well-kept furniture, and all that goes with household pride, are the surest signs of moral improvement and wellbeing ; while care about dress and all that goes with personal pride are the unfailing tests of self-respect and a rising standard of life. Do not analogous principles apply also to the missions ?

There is in this chronic shabbiness nothing to choose

between Church and Chapel, or independent denominational effort. Everywhere bright exceptions may be pointed to, but these only 'prove the rule'; and those to whom it does not apply would admit that mission buildings are too often and too generally allowed to fall into disrepair.

The amount of work done from these shabby centres is, however, in the aggregate, enormous. In character it differs little. All the missions, of whatever description, or denomination, or lack of denomination, take up very similar ground. They set out to preach the Gospel, to teach and train the children, to influence and guide the mothers, to visit the homes and relieve poverty. They bring help in sickness and comfort in distress. They all seek to inculcate temperance, and most aim at being centres of social relaxation and enjoyment, while underlying all is the desire to lead man to God. And all alike acknowledge that if this be not accomplished nothing is accomplished. The heart must be touched.

They may express themselves in slightly different language, yet the thought is the same. It is therefore by their success in arousing religious feeling that these efforts must first be tested; and we ask, do they in fact succeed in leading the people—men, women, or children—to God? Or to what extent do they succeed? Or do some succeed and some not? Or in what directions is success secured?

No one disputes the spiritual need of the people. To this the mere presence of all these missions testifies. It is admittedly a 'heathen' world in which they are at work, and in spite of all their efforts a 'heathen' world it remains. Yet a certain degree of success is almost universal, and is found with small as well as with large missions. Most have for their core a body of earnest Christian workers, not only those from outside 'sent' to do this work, but those who have been won over;

those who, having found salvation for themselves, devote their lives to the winning of other souls and thus help to perpetuate the mission. No doubt there are some who find their living in this work and may be influenced by that fact, but it is no easy living, and with few exceptions the motive power is missionary zeal. The administration of these multifarious organizations, which in seeking to grapple with physical and spiritual destitution employ thousands of agents and disburse immense sums of money, is wonderfully pure.

So far as it goes the success is real. It consists in the finding and binding together of kindred spirits in the service of God, and in maintaining a never-ending fight against the ungodliness and indifference around them. In this struggle they sustain high hopes in spite of continual disappointment; for though real as far as it goes the success is absolutely limited and very far from what they set out to achieve. Some may appear to succeed in a wider sense and may even be firmly assured of it themselves, but the seeming success generally lacks solidity, and is due to some form of inflation. Those who claim it are self-deceived. Perhaps they wish to be so. In other cases the apparent failure is admitted, and results are humbly left in God's hands.

The family as a unit is rarely influenced. Individuals are caught more or less completely—the children, a mother, young girls or lads, occasionally a father. When this last happens other members of the family are nearly always caught as well; but as a rule, whatever may be happening to some individual member, the family goes its own way, sometimes alienated but generally indifferent.

Numerical success may be obtained in two ways, themselves closely interconnected. The one is by what is called a continuous mission, when special religious services are maintained from day to day

or even sometimes from hour to hour, for a specified time. This device is common to nearly all denominations, and always bears the name of 'mission.' Even the undenominational organizations adopt it. The object is to deepen religious feeling and arouse enthusiasm among regular adherents, to emphasize the claims of spiritual life on the young who have not yet declared themselves, and above all to attract and affect those usually untouched by religion: in short, 'to bring souls to God.'

Among Roman Catholics and with the High Church, processions and banners, gorgeous robes and heightened ceremonial are employed to stimulate interest, but among Evangelical Protestants the stress of spiritual excitement is even more intense. By all, the chief reliance is upon great preachers, such as know well how to play upon the emotions. Crowds come to hear them; the inspiration is reciprocal; and God is felt to be very near.

But in almost every case the bulk of those who attend are regular church-goers, and it may be questioned whether they really profit by these high-pressure experiences. Enthusiasm is certainly aroused, but it is doubtful if it lasts, or if true religious feeling is deepened by such 'spiritual dram-drinking.' As to outsiders, for whose sake more particularly the missions are held, the attempt is always practically a failure. Some will be attracted, and of them a few may be deeply moved to adopt a new life; but, as with ordinary mission work, such success is a question of a few individuals, difficult to win, and still more difficult to hold. The mass remain untouched.

The other way in which numerical success is attained is the use made by some of the great independent missions of popular evangelistic preaching. Their services draw in the roving religious population, and the attraction is maintained, like that of a theatre, by frequent

change of performance. Each great preacher 'runs' for so many nights, and the people crowd in because 'they know they will hear something good.' The numbers who attend such services are great, but the widening of the range of religious influence is almost inappreciable.

Thus the direct preaching of the Gospel message results in disappointment, even when numerical success may be obtained, and we turn to the practical side of Christianity. From the Gospel according to St. Paul we pass to the Gospel according to St. James.

Sunday-school work lies midway. The schools directly attached to churches and chapels are attended, in the case of the Nonconformists as well as of the Church of England, by children from comfortable working-class homes, and we have already noted the great hopes entertained as to the future results of this early religious training, especially by those whose teaching is most dogmatic—hopes which even for them seem doomed to disappointment. But these can hardly arise at all as regards schools connected with missions where the 'practical side' of Christianity has come uppermost. To their schools come the children of the poor. They learn to sing hymns, and they become accustomed to a reverent use of the Bible and to appeals to God in prayer; the atmosphere is religious; but those who attach importance to questions of belief cannot possibly regard it as giving a religious training. The children are gathered in out of the streets, and their teachers try to make them decent and gentle. If they become more neat in their dress, cleaner in their persons and better behaved, it is accounted success. With such children as these food and clothing are of the first importance; physical wants transcend the spiritual ones to an overpowering degree. The Gospel

message, however often repeated, awakens little or no response. Religious truths do not take root.

The discipline of the Sunday school is often very imperfect, but nevertheless the training given, and the relations that result between the children and their teachers, may be rightly regarded as of great value in supplementing the influence of the elementary day schools; while beyond this the Sunday school is considered by those who manage the missions, as of special importance as leading to an acquaintance with the mothers, opening a way to the homes, and so providing a basis for the whole machinery of 'practical Christianity.'

'Mothers' meetings are almost exclusively for the poor, and are thus on the mission side of religious work. • It is unusual for the wives of regularly employed, well-to-do working men to attend them. As religious influences or as taking the place of regular religious observances, these meetings amount to very little, although as moral and social influences they may, if guided by wise and kindly people, be extremely wholesome and beneficial. As regards religion, the effects are much the same as with the Sunday schools. The singing of hymns is a pleasure to the women and a reverent attitude is maintained as regards the Bible and prayer to God; but religious truths have hardly any more grip on the mothers than on the children. Religion is rarely taken home. Just as tidiness and orderliness are the virtues mainly demanded and inculcated in the one case, so are prudence and thrift in the other; and just as the good behaviour of the children is encouraged and made easier by timely presents and rewarded by treats, so is saving fostered and economy made more possible for the women by coal and clothing clubs, while tea parties and excursions pleasantly bind the whole together.

The relations established with the women widen

the basis that the schools provide. More doors are open ; more homes are known. All are visited : the poor are succoured and the sick are cared for. Those who do this come in the name of Christ, bringing material assistance in one hand and the Gospel in the other. But this, the last chance for direct religious influence, perhaps brings the bitterest disappointment of all ; for not only is the Divine message, thus delivered, ineffective, but it proves to be positively harmful. Sunday schools and mothers' meetings do at any rate cause religion to be honoured and raise the moral tone, whereas the admixture of Gospel and giving produces an atmosphere of meanness and hypocrisy, and brings discredit on both charity and religion.

These special evils resulting from the combination of religion and relief are to some extent avoided when the gifts and the feeding assume wholesale proportions, as in some cases they do ; but instead we then have moral mischief on the economic side, in the shape of pauperisation and the perpetuation of dependent poverty.

Missions vary greatly in the success achieved in steering through these perils, but even when the leaders are most conscious of the rocks they are often unable entirely to avoid them. It seems almost impossible to prevent charitable and religious effort from taking the line of least resistance. It is easy to reach the children and poor women—easy to be kind, but difficult even for the most watchful to realize the evils that may result from careless kindness, or avoid economic evils, do what they will ; while those who think about the matter at all, and perhaps have qualms as to the wisdom of what they do, are nevertheless tempted to lay the flattering unction to their souls, and argue that kindness in itself is good, and that benefit must necessarily follow from its manifestation.

§ 2

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The active virtue of missions lies in their enthusiasm, and the corresponding fault is exaggeration. Principles and expectations differ, but enthusiastic zeal and exaggerated language are common to nearly all. The workers start out with highly strung expectations based partly on the natural exaltation of self-sacrifice, and partly on their faith in what they regard as the unfailing promises of God's Word. There may be some who take to good works as an anodyne in order to escape the worry of doubt, but usually it is not so. As a rule those who undertake missionary work have themselves found a religious anchorage and ardently wish that others should share it. They know that God has spoken to them, and if others have not heard His voice, it is because their ears have not been opened. It follows that the mental attitude towards spiritual things characteristic of each religious body, though it may not greatly affect the general results of mission work, does show itself plainly in regard both to what is expected and to what is claimed, and it is the same with the unattached missions.

To begin with the Ritualistic attitude. We find here the most amazing unrealized and unrealizable hopes of bringing souls to God through the sacraments, and of repose being found in the authority of the Church and through satisfaction in its services. It is by those who are themselves affected in this way, laymen as well as clergy, that these ideas are entertained, and so sure are they that their way is the way ordained of God that they cannot admit its failure. Most of all is this the attitude of the working members of sisterhoods. Consequently as much as possible is made of every genuine case in which this religious influence takes effect, while many that are far from genuine are greedily accepted, and it

would seem that almost any means to secure adhesion are considered justifiable. Since its exponents believe 'that theirs is the only road, this faith by its very nature is exclusive, and upon those who accept it all the temporal benefits the Church can offer are lavished. Thus High Church mission work is characterized by enthusiasm and devotion, and by extraordinary energy, but is marred by unscrupulousness, and by unwarrantable pretensions which result in bitter sectarian feeling. In their work the most good is done by the teaching of the children, the most harm by the distribution of charities ; and though some souls are won, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that by their efforts in this direction more harm than good results.

The ordinary parish mission is more wholesome. Though apt to regard all others as interlopers, this view is taken rather in the interests of discipline and from a sense of the necessity of co-ordination than with any desire to condemn the individual action of outsiders. It will even be admitted that all are labouring in the same cause and serving the same Master. The exclusive claim made, and the affectation of superiority which goes with it, are indeed resented, but no sectarian bitterness is engendered thereby. About parish work of this kind there is no extravagant pretension, nor, perhaps, much enthusiasm, but on the other hand there is little exaggeration. It is simple duty-loving effort for the amending and amelioration of life. The love of God and the sense of fellowship with Christ lie beneath, deep in the heart, and though its agents would never say it themselves, the claim frequently made by others that 'Eternity alone will show the results,' is especially true of this work.

The favourite delusion in this case is that the people themselves take an interest in the work, whereas they take hardly any at all. Appeals for money constantly begin by statements to the effect that 'our people, who

are all poor, have done what they can,' and raised so much towards the sum needed. The truth is that what has been raised has almost invariably come from the parson and his private friends, from the middle-class members of the congregation, or from such devices as a bazaar or rummage sale, and that neither the working classes nor the poor have contributed at all. The working class accept the services of the Sunday school and the treats that are offered for their children, and do not hesitate to take advantage of the assistance of a country holiday fund if offered, but themselves take no part or interest in the mission work of the Church; while the poor are ready to receive whatever is to be had and are never even asked to give.

The fond idea that the poor are ready to make sacrifices for a beloved church, is a delusion mainly confined to ordinary parish work. Even the High Churches, where doctrinal affinity tends to supersede parish boundaries, do not share it. With them the care of the poor is the duty of the Church. Nor do the Nonconformists make any mistake as to this. Their mission work is always based on a frank appeal to their members to make sacrifices for the sake of the poor. But by all some response from the poor is looked for, and each body in its own particular way exaggerates, first what its mission surely will do, and next what it surely has done. It is not easy to admit, even to themselves, that the response is lacking or has taken a shape quite different from what was expected. Some self-deception is needed to sustain their own enthusiasm, and some deception of others to retain financial support, and such forms of deception are not wanting.

The acceptance of defeat is difficult enough for those who rest their hopes of success on the progress of humanity, to which they believe that their principles provide the key, but is still more embarrassing for those who have pledged themselves that the Lord is on

their side. To such hopes and beliefs all who have them cling, but enthusiasm and self-deception and exaggerated language reach the climax with those living ever in an atmosphere of miracle who are assured that heaven is opened by their prayers and that upon their special mission work the Holy Ghost descends in power.

We often find on the small unattached missions—and sometimes it is the case with the larger ones also—the unmistakable stamp of the individuality of some one man or woman, or it may be the combined individuality of a man and his wife. These missions vary in character accordingly, but to most of them there comes a certain sobriety which is best described as the effect of professionalism. Under this influence the work has usually settled down to a routine free from excitement and without much room for self-delusion. For those engaged it is an occupation, and in many, if not most cases, also a livelihood. There are instances in which the missionary draws upon his own resources, but as a rule financial support comes from outside, from the subscriptions of a small number of persons, or from the generosity of one patron. In reporting progress their agent, no doubt, uses the kind of language that is expected from him. He speaks of his work, somewhat conventionally, in the terms which are needed to maintain his and its character in the eyes of his supporters, but there is no deception in this. It is not upon such phrases, but upon a belief, which may be very well grounded, in his honest devotion to his work and in the reality of its religious basis, that their confidence depends. There is sometimes frequent personal contact between them and him; and then they share his triumphs and his troubles from day to day. They do not need to be spurred by sensational stories or buoyed up with inflated hopes; a printed report, if one is issued, becomes perfunctory.

In some cases, and these are perhaps the most

interesting, a poor man, a man of the people, a born missionary, himself filled with Christian zeal, has tried to bring conviction to others and has gathered round him a band of co-workers. After a prolonged struggle and many disappointments, he at length encounters and touches the heart of someone with wealth. Then the work gradually becomes professional. In other instances, the reverse happens, and a person of means, having thrown him or herself into mission work, seeks paid assistance in order to carry it on more regularly. The undertaking may begin with a class of boys or girls and slowly develop into a club or school or mission centre; or visiting in poor streets, followed by the employment of a woman of the people to assist, may lead to the holding of mothers' meetings, to the systematic giving of charitable relief, and perhaps to a soup kitchen. Others again begin with medical relief, preaching the Gospel to all who come for treatment. And finally, there are some whose initial motive is hostility to the action of those who hold divergent religious views.

The enthusiasm underlying these little missions which has given rise to so much self-devoted action, and sustained it in many cases during a lifetime, is deeply religious, and from nearly all some form of religious propaganda emanates, but for the most part the propagandist motive is merged in overflowing pity for the feeble and the stricken; in simple efforts to benefit the children and bring help and comfort to the poor and the distressed; and in sad and weary denunciation of indulgence in drink. There may be little exaltation of spirit or exaggeration of expression about this work, but without constant self-deception it could hardly go on at all. It is often said of those that engage in it, that 'their hearts are too big for their heads,' and those who try to secure a perfected parish organization, or better administration of charity, find their greatest

obstacle in the action of these good, but perhaps unwise souls.

The large undenominational missions once were small. Their expansion has been due to business-like management and mastery in the arts of advertising and appeal. There is enthusiasm, but it is in harness, and with them exaggerated language bears the stamp of calculation. There is, however, something grand in the scale of their work, which may well raise feelings of pride in all concerned and which secures a never-failing succession of men of capacity to carry it on. The minor missions come and go—some succeeding, others failing: those that shut to-day, open again to-morrow under new management; the impulse only is continuous; but the large organizations acquire traditions and become permanent institutions, and are able to rely with perfect confidence on their apparently precarious income. They know their public. They flood the country with heart-stirring appeals, and the money comes. Their work is wholesale, and has the wholesale virtues. They have immense Sunday schools, gigantic provident clubs and huge mothers' meetings, all very business-like, and giving, one may say, the best value for the money, but with very little individual knowledge. Their charities are widely spread; in a season of distress all who ask and seem to need are relieved. Inquiry is impossible. Their preaching of the Gospel is no less wholesale. Those who come may be benefited, but as individuals the great majority are unknown.

Missions of every description, having the same possibilities open to them, and being confronted with the same difficulties and subject to the same limitations, are constrained to adopt very similar methods; but some of these are more particularly associated with certain kinds of missionary enterprise.

Thus (leaving aside the special work of the London City Mission, which consists mainly of a round of visits)

systematic visitation from house to house is most incumbent on and is best done by the Church of England ; and by the instrumentality of sisterhoods and deaconesses the work has been more and more professionalized, especially in connection with the High Church body. In recent times this tendency has also been very marked in the Wesleyan Methodist Missions, whose great attempt to popularize religion seems to sum up nearly everything that has been done or thought of to reach the people.

Soup kitchens, again, are characteristic of the ordinary parish view of poverty and its needs. They provide, at the lowest possible cost, necessary nourishment, which all who will can buy, and which is offered freely to prevent starvation. The kitchen is not always open, but is always in readiness in case of the need occurring, and such need is calmly looked forward to as an inevitable incident of life connected with bad trade or a cold winter. The same idea, more thoughtfully developed, has given rise to centres for the cookery and distribution of food for invalids, and this, too, is most often connected with parish mission work. Free meals for poor children, on the other hand, are mostly provided by the small independent missions. They usually know nothing of the children they serve, but, having provided the meals, give tickets to the teachers at the poorest of the neighbouring schools for distribution to suitable children. In each of these cases what appears to be the definite need of the moment is made the only condition. Because of their need the starving family, the victim of sickness, and the hungry child, require and receive relief.

But for wholesale distribution of charity—gifts of food, coals and clothing ; ‘ tickets ’ (which become almost a currency) for all manner of supplies ; cash occasionally, as when tools have been pawned ; ‘ maternity bags ’ ; and ‘ hospital letters,’ without count—

none can compete with the great begging and spending missions. Nor would many wish to do so. The system is denounced on all hands, even by those whose own giving is admitted to be 'only limited by lack of means.' Yet it may be less mischievous for gifts thus to fall, like the rain from heaven, on the just and on the unjust, than for their distribution to be determined by religious sentiment played upon by canting hypocrisy, or by a soft heart melting at some false tale of woe.

Medical missions have sprung from the individual action of men who, combining religious enthusiasm with a knowledge of medicine, and seized, perhaps, by the power of Bible words concerning Christ as a physician, desire to turn their professional skill to account in the cause of religion. It is only by the Wesleyans that this plan has been adopted as a regular plank in the mission platform. When used in this systematic way, the medical rather than the religious side comes uppermost. A medical enthusiast for humanity is more easy to find than a medical evangelist.

The 'people's lawyer,' a device first adopted at Mansfield House, Canning Town, drifts still further from religion towards ordinary human needs. The man who gives his services may be a good Christian as well as a sound lawyer, but it is not easy to see how the advice he is asked to give can be made an opening for Gospel teaching; and in point of fact I think this is never attempted. Those who come for medical assistance invariably sit through a religious service while waiting for the doctor, and advantage is usually taken of the softening of the heart in sickness and sorrow, to 'point to the Great Physician,' but one should think that no such opening or opportunity would be afforded by even the most righteous 'struggle with a bad landlord or rapacious money lender.'

The attempt to alleviate the hard lot of crippled children has been systematized by the Ragged School

Union, and the whole of London has been divided into districts in which 'Cripples' Parlours' are established, where those who can walk or be brought are gathered at frequent intervals, whilst those who cannot leave their homes are visited. The work, which has been over-exploited in appeals for money, is shared by others. The Wesleyans, in connection with their great missions, have given prominence to it under the name of the 'League of Poor Brave Things,' and the same work is done with less ostentation by the 'Invalid Children's Aid Association.' The more difficult task of caring for and teaching the feeble-minded (outside of definite institutions), and the provision of special schools for those affected by blindness or other physical defect, is now undertaken by the London School Board, to which body some of the Settlements have given much assistance as regards both crippled and feeble-minded children.

The Wesleyan missions are also making a special effort to bring those of the rough children of the streets, who practically evade the elementary school system, under religious or at any rate humanizing influences, by means of evening classes made attractive by cups of cocoa. The attempt is not confined to this denomination, but by whomsoever tried under these conditions, it is not very effectual. Only when the children are taken in hand completely, as is done by Dr. Barnardo's institution and others of the same kind, is any great success achieved.

To the common stock of missionary enterprise, the Society of Friends has contributed the 'adult school' and the example set is now being followed in many quarters. I have described the working of this organization elsewhere. It has a strictly democratic constitution, and forms a kind of religious co-operative society, based on a Biblical debating club, from which it aims at producing a true social brotherhood.

And lastly we may mention the systematic collection of savings, and still more distinctively the use of private-venture free libraries and reading rooms, in connection with their work, as a very special feature of the Unitarian missions.

Of the world-wide missionary organizations which have their central offices, and sometimes their training schools, in London, it would be beyond the scope of this book to speak, except so far as they find here a home field of operation, or take their place in congregational effort. In many of the annual reports we find pleasantly familiar references to the work going on in distant lands, in which an interest is taken, initials being used (according to the fashion of the day), which though familiar to the initiated, are puzzling to any outsider, such as O. O. M., meaning Our Own Mission, or T. Y. E., of which I have not myself discovered the meaning. The illustrated stories from mission fields, published in religious periodicals, are often fascinating tales of adventure. But in addition to foreign missions, large and small, efforts are made to meet the needs of special classes which, if not found only in London, are at any rate represented there. Some of these have been referred to in previous volumes : missions to the Jews, mentioned in connection with Whitechapel, to seamen and boatmen in connection with the river front, and to railway men, mostly in South London ; and there are others with like definite objects. This kind of work is strictly professional and, as a rule, highly organized and rather costly. The missions have been started and are maintained by those, for the most part a small body of people, who take a special interest in the particular subject, but appeals are often made to those whose financial interests are in some way connected—as to railway shareholders for a railway mission. The work done has not come much under our notice.

The London City Mission, whose emissaries, numbering nearly five hundred, are to be found in every poor part of London, deserves a full description here ; all the more so because from the very fact of its ubiquitous character, it has not been possible to do justice to the work locally.

Out of this large band of missionaries about one-fourth are appointed to work, not by districts, but among particular classes of men, such as cabmen and carmen, coalies, canal boatmen, gasworkers, railway men and theatrical employees ; or in public-houses or hospitals, or other places where large numbers of people congregate or are employed, as at the docks or markets. Others combine work of this kind with that connected with a district, and the rest devote themselves to district visiting only, working in carefully defined areas, containing so many visitable families upon whom it is the missionary's business to call repeatedly in a regular routine, the single round occupying so many weeks or months. In a district where the people shift house frequently, acquaintance has to be made with many newcomers on each round, but not infrequently those who move turn up again in a neighbouring street. The missionaries often remain for many years on their beat, and, becoming well known and being honest kindly people, their periodical visits are welcomed. It is their duty to 'put in a word for Christ,' and they have no other duty than that described in this simple way. The rules of the Society forbid almsgiving, and the relations of the missionaries with the poor are by this made all the better. In some sort the rule is evaded, as, although no fund is provided or even allowed, charitable people often stand ready to help through the missionary, or follow any hint that he may give them. This roundabout method affords, however, some guarantee of care, and the ways in which the restriction is got

over are hardly to be accounted an abuse. Similarly, the Society does not intend its work to take shape and develop into independent churches. Each missionary is put under the superintendence of some local resident, frequently a clergyman or minister, and it is his duty to urge upon all attendance at some regular place of worship, and to 'pass on' any converts he may make. But this rule, too, is not always observed. A missionary who has a hall in which he regularly preaches on Sunday evening, tends to gather round him a body of supporters, and then with their aid to develop the work upon ordinary mission lines. But even so, the legitimate weekday work of visiting is never dropped.

The place these missionaries fill and the part they play are quite unique: their experiences are related with the conviction and *naïveté* of a mediæval saint. Not too far removed in social status from those they visit—father confessor at once and friend; themselves absolutely satisfied of the truth and sufficiency of the simple Gospel they preach; neither distrusted nor pandered to; instinctive in their horror of Rome and Romish ways, but with a good word for every Evangelical Church or Protestant sect—they are, more than all the rest, in tune with the sentiments of the people.

By some of the clergy they are accepted as valuable assistants, and, as stated, a number of the parochial clergy act as their local superintendents, but their co-operation is by no means generally welcomed. Even Evangelical clergymen are not content to be placed in that position of equality with the Nonconformist Churches which is assigned to them by the Society, and which is in practice often turned to one of inferiority. By the Ritualists the missionaries are with reason regarded as positively hostile.

§ 3

OPINIONS EXPRESSED

In quoting opinions as to the work of the Church of England, I confined myself to those expressed by her clergy themselves, and I followed the same rule as regards the Nonconformists. In the quotations that follow I feel less strictly bound, but they are all from remarks made by those who, if not actually themselves engaged in mission work, are in close touch with it.

‘With so many efforts no one ought to be unsaved,’ says one, but adds that ‘though religious organization is active its influence is temporary.’ A Presbyterian minister is sceptical of the value of missions altogether, thinking that ‘the people should take the burthen on themselves.’ A Congregationalist expresses the opinion that ‘missions do as much evil as good, with their gifts, by fostering hypocrisy.’

One of the Church of England clergy says : ‘The question how to get at London is always present. The mission services do not attract those for whom they are meant, but rather those who have been to church or chapel elsewhere, or such as prefer a free and easy meeting to a regular service. They do not bring the poor from the slums ; to these the Gospel must be taken.’ A Congregationalist minister who used to undertake the mission service once every week tells us that he gave it up on finding that those who came to it were only his own or other religious people. From an Undenominational mission we have it that ‘many come to us from other services.’

The fact that the missions only prosper by robbing the Churches is often dwelt upon. If they attain life at all they ‘tend to become independent.’ One of the most active of the Church of England clergy says,

‘Mission work only succeeds where there is no church, and when a vigorous man is forming a new congregation.’ A City missionary reports that the large mission halls with popular preaching are taking the place of churches. People dislike being seen going to a local place of worship, and so go further off where they are not known. And the small missions also suffer. He complains of a great falling off in the attendance at his own hall consequent on the preaching of a popular evangelist at one of the large mission centres.

A Wesleyan minister says: ‘Little missions are failing, big subsidized ones taking their place; it being found very difficult to get adults to come to the small ones.’ People like missions where they can drop in with less responsibility. But it is still said to be the ‘steady religious people who are drawn and who come as though to a pious kind of entertainment.’ It is thus a ‘floating religious population’ that is attracted, and one witness goes so far as to denounce such services as ‘a device of the Devil, because they lead to an empty form of religion, making no demands on life.’ ‘The influence does not last, and meanwhile the chapels are killed.’

It is generally admitted that ‘mission work has become harder and harder as the people have become used to it.’ ‘Methods which once attracted have become stale.’ ‘Lantern services, for instance, are no longer so effective.’ ‘Brass band and negro evangelists are played out, the extraordinary has become the ordinary, and no longer attracts.’ It is being discovered by some that ‘converted coalheavers do not really do as good work as regular ministers and clergy,’ and in another quarter we hear that the ‘converted prize-fighter element is being dropped.’ One witness even attributes the prevalent lack of religion to a reaction against these sensational forms, but they are nevertheless still a great deal used. At one mission we hear

of 'interesting and instructive (temperance) addresses entitled "Catch 'em alive." ' At another, the missionaries go familiarly by nicknames, of which they are proud, such as 'Salvation Jack,' 'Banjo,' and 'the Bishop.'

'Street preaching by uneducated men brings religion into disrespect,' says one; but although this may seem at times to be the case, some of the most genuine and least sensational mission work in London is done by poor and uneducated men, who win respect by the strict rule of life which they adopt as well as by their devotion to the cause they preach; and it is felt that 'the people are approached best by those who have a knowledge of the condition of their lives.'

The wholesale distribution of tickets for treats, 'in order to show large totals,' is strongly condemned, and the Ragged School Union is mentioned as a sinner in this respect. It is one of the undesirable features in the advertising system on which 'In His Name' they obtain their great income. But they do not stand alone in allowing the end to justify the means adopted to collect money for charitable objects. There are worse examples.

Moreover, in many cases the merit of the work done is as questionable as the plans adopted to obtain support. Its character has been sufficiently described in previous volumes, and neighbouring workers support the view we have taken. For instance, of Mr. Atkinson's work (although what is collected is largely passed on to other centres for distribution), one of the clergy says that though no doubt honest, its methods are pernicious; and of Mr. Reuben May and his work we have the following expression of opinion, also from one of the Church clergy:—'I think him sincere, with an honest wish to relieve the very poorest. His methods are, however, quite indiscriminate, and he probably does a lot of harm. Considerable numbers

attend his meetings, but at a centre at which it is notorious that gifts in kind are going, numbers are, of course, no guide in measuring influences.'

These are 'leading cases,' but in truth the charitable relief given by the missions of almost every description is rarely wise. The dangers of overlapping are ignored, and the necessity for thoroughness, no less than for sympathy, is not grasped. The opinion, again of one of the Church of England clergy, that slums are over-visited and demoralized is held by many. We hear for instance of one poor street visited by about ten agencies, whose combined efforts, it was said, enabled the people to live on charity, and of the embarrassment caused by a large annual gift of dessicated soup for which no good use could be found.

I will add a few extracts regarding the London City Mission to emphasize what has been already said as to its work.

The missionaries belonging to this great Society very commonly claim that they alone visit systematically. 'The Churches may profess to do it, but usually confine themselves to those who attend their services or meetings.' 'The same is true of the Wesleyans.' The City missionary goes alike to those who do and those who do not attend, and 'even calls upon the Church verger.' Jealousies arise. 'We are supposed to send our people to churches, but it is best to be candid; it is impossible to carry on, on these terms. To send away our best workers would be suicidal.'

Others do seem honestly to try to pass on those they have converted or can influence, and claim to have done so; but in another case we hear that 'most who attend the mission accept it as their religious home.'

From this and other reasons arise the relations, which, as we have seen are not very comfortable, between the London City missionaries and the Church.

‘No co-operation ; isolated ; vicar against me,’ says one of these men ; and on their side many of the Church clergy make no secret of their feeling on the subject : ‘Snake in the grass,’ ‘Nuisance,’ ‘Opponents of the Church,’ ‘Working against the Church,’ are phrases used. The feeling, as we have already indicated, is naturally strongest on the part of the High Church clergy, who are irritated by the implication contained in the statement that the missionaries are only expected to ‘send their people to churches ‘where the Gospel is preached ;’ but it is shared by representatives of all sections, and an even more aggrieved resentment is felt by some of the Evangelicals, one of whom complains that in his parish there are three of these men actively working against the Church. Their relations with Nonconformist Churches are more uniformly friendly ; there is more natural sympathy felt with them, and where those influenced do not attend the missionary’s own hall, they seem to attach themselves, more frequently than not, to some orthodox Nonconformist Church.

The City missionaries find visiting very hard in a new district, with much ‘door-step work,’ but there is always scope for judgment and discrimination. One of them gives the following account of his proceedings and experiences. ‘He does not always read the Bible or pray, but he turns the talk into spiritual channels and intermingles texts or presents a tract and seeks to drive it home with the spoken word. He is well received, but scarcely ever sees the men. Sceptical argument has disappeared. Women recognise the message as good and true, and offer excuses for non-attendance at church, or [employing the *argumentum ad hominem*] ask, “What’s the good of church-going if church-goers are no better than so and so.”’ Another missionary says he would rather visit men than women ; he can get something out of them. ‘They will say what

they think when they don't agree, whereas with women it is "Yes, sir"—"No, sir"—and "Good day," and all over when the door is closed.' Another, referring to the periodical report he had to make to his Society, said, 'There is so much sham in the religious world that I am almost ashamed to write.' But the most discouraging thing is said to be that 'the people go away and the work must ever begin again.' Another, working in a very low neighbourhood, speaking of conversions, says he occasionally had definite cases, but 'they leave the neighbourhood as soon as may be.'

As to the relief of poverty, it is admitted that the rule of not giving is not strictly observed. 'The rule,' says one, 'is in effect inoperative;' and another explains that although nothing of the kind figures in their accounts, 'they may administer the contributions of others,' and a good deal practically seems to pass. 'Without something to give (directly or indirectly) their task would be hopeless; you cannot separate Christianity from benevolence.'

CHAPTER VII

ILLUSTRATIONS

(SELECTIONS FROM MISSION REPORTS)

THE printed material of the missions consists mainly either of general reports (as a rule incorporating an appeal and lists of subscribers and accounts) or of special appeals. Substantial 'manuals' and 'year-books,' like those issued by the denominations, are never found, and it is only in the case of the larger missions that the printed matter is at all voluminous. Much of it is, however, widely circulated, particularly the special circulars and appeals issued by missions that seek to raise their funds from any likely source, far or near. •

Pictures are sometimes inserted in the text by missions that raise their funds from a widely scattered public. They may be merely representations of the mission buildings, or mission meetings of one kind or another may be shown, or portraits of the missionaries and their helpers, but the most effective form of illustration is that of figures, sometimes from actual photographs, at other times more or less imaginary, representing the natural savage of the streets and the slums, and the civilized creature—it may be the same boy or girl—after having come under mission influence. In some cases the cover is a mass of small pictures illustrating various branches of the work of the mission, and in others •

allegory is used which is of interest as indicating the standpoint and aims of many of the missions. In one we see a lighthouse, set in the midst of a stormy sea but planted upon the "impregnable Rock of Ages." Great waves are breaking upon the light-house, and reach even to the lantern—on the one side, the wave of "Sabbath-breaking," and on the other those of "Ritualism," "Drunkennes" and "Religious Indifference." Each section of the lighthouse is labelled, the two largest and those nearest the base being "Faith" and "Prayer." Then follow "Children's Special Services," "Bible Readings," "Sunday School and Band of Hope," "Open-air Work," "Tract Visiting," "Temperance," "Girls' and Women's Social Meeting," and "Adult Bible-class," till the top of the stonework is reached, where, round the rim, the words "Mission Services" are printed. The lantern, bearing the words "Saved to Serve," flashes out upon an ink-black sky, the moon just breaking through dark clouds near the horizon. In the white light of the lantern the following references are boldly printed: "Mark xi. 28; Isaiah xliii. 11; Luke ii. 32; John viii. 12; John i. 4; John ix. 5." On the cupola are the words 'Jesus only,' and a tiny cross surmounts the whole.

Although a great similarity is discernible between many of the missions, it is impossible to point to any single type, or to present a series of extracts that will throw any very general light on mission enterprise. Missions are the free lances of the religious world, training their weapons at will, as chance and opportunity may seem to offer. In administration, as well as in methods of work, they are equally free from submission to any generally accepted principles, and they range in practice from pure democracy to pure autocracy; from the strictest orthodoxy (these including the great majority) to humanitarianism; and from

reckless and not very honest sensationalism to the quiet and careful performance of good work.

The following extracts have been selected to show some of the ways in which missions make their start and the aims they set before themselves ; the kind of work they do, and the form of appeals they issue.

(I.) * * * * * *Institution.* •

[*Extracts from Chairman's Address (Fifty-fifth Annual Report).*]

One can remember when there were four workers of the * * * * * Mission—nearly despairing of being able to do anything for the children—and how they were only enabled to carry on the work through faith in God. And those four, who put up a prayer to Almighty God for help, received an answer, for it was through them that Lord Shaftesbury became first aware of what was being done, and it was through his extraordinary ability, single-mindedness and whole-heartedness that the great work has reached what it is to-day. We are all rejoicing that so much has been done in the last sixty years ; but while we thank our Father in heaven, do not let us forget that there remains much more to be done if we are really to meet the responsibilities and duties that are at our door. One of our speakers said that an object of the * * * * * Institution was to “grapple with poverty.” Yes. I remember I was once asked what I should recommend as something that might be done to remove the great poverty from our midst. And although I had many reforms in my mind, in my answer I said, “I think two words are sufficient; Christianize England.”

[*From a Treasurer's Speech.*]

Our Ragged Schools, our Ragged Church, our Industrial homes, our mothers' meetings : if these were not in existence many human beings would never hear the Word of Life, and would never be pointed to the Saviour of the world. We therefore submit that our institution, in common with many others of a kindred nature, is doing a work that only Eternity will reveal the results of.

[*From Report.*]

The work is worthy to be maintained. Every department of it is a response to a deep and crying necessity. It has to do with humanity in its saddest aspects—dilapidated by poverty, emaciated by want, debased by sin; and it extends its benefits to the helpless of all ages, from the infant in arms, whom it gently tends in the crèche, to the aged mendicant who at its Ragged Church service listens to the Gospel and is afterwards regaled on cocoa and bread. It is a means of blessing to tens of thousands of the most forlorn and miserable of the population, to whom its curtailment, through failure of resources, would be a serious disaster.

The Committee therefore plead most earnestly in the interests of those who so deeply need their help, for the continued and increased support of a labour of love, which appeals to the tenderest human sympathies, and which is carried on in the name of Him who promises that a gift of a cup of cold water should not lose its reward.

(2.) * * * * * *Mission and Ragged Schools.*

[*From Report.*]

Through what tender mercies of our God, we are brought to the close of another year. Oh, what boundless goodness and rich distinguishing mercy have followed us, not merely through the year, but through each and every year since the commencement of this work among the people and children of East London. "Hitherto the Lord has helped us." Wonderfully has He prospered the work in the past. All praise is due to Him. "He hath done all things well." "Not one thing has failed."

For forty-three years the Lord has smiled upon and blessed this great work carried on for Him amongst the people and children of East London. We are filled with amazement in the review of the past. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name, give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."

There are more than thirty missionary agencies in operation, having for their object "the spiritual and temporal benefit of young and old."

. Our old boys and girls are to be found settled all over the world. Many have emigrated and are now

settled in distant colonies and doing well. A great many are Christian workers labouring for their Divine Master. . . .

The Lord has again been pleased to supply the necessary funds to carry on His own work. We leave in implicit confidence the matter of funds in the hands of the Lord, who, in the future, as in the past, will supply all our need. We believe He will provide for His own work.

In conclusion, much remains to be done. There are neglected and uncared-for children to be rescued. Drunkards to be reclaimed. There are those living in sin to be dealt with. There are sufferers lingering out a miserable existence to be sought out and visited. There are sinners of all sorts to be reached—nothing but the Gospel of Christ can raise the degraded and fallen. “The Gospel of Christ.” What a standpoint. All truth! All holiness! All peace! All love! Thank God there is a Gospel of Christ, to cover the very sins which that Gospel condemns.

Workers are much required, workers taught of God. Taught by the Holy Ghost. “He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us.” He teaches as none else can ever teach.

There are classes requiring teachers. There are young people who need to be taken in hand by the soul-loving Christians. There are various meetings, for which good speakers are wanted. A great deal of work waiting ready for self-denying labourers, who give Christ the chief place in everything, that souls may be saved and God glorified.

Looking back and retracing all the way the Lord has led us, we are deeply impressed with the fact, What debtors we have been to sovereign grace. We are deeply impressed with the sense of the Lord’s marvellous long-suffering and mercy, His patience, His forbearance, His wonderful goodness to us for so many years.

He has stood by us in the great and difficult work He has placed in our hands to do for Him. He has made ample provision for every difficulty, and not one good thing has He withheld. So that we have learned from experience the truth of His precious words, “Be careful of nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication

with thanksgiving make your requests known unto God, and God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

We leave the future in the Lord's hands. We shall find His unchangeableness, His faithfulness, His power, His love will be enough for us.

(3.) *The * * * * * Gospel Mission. To succour and to save.*

[From Report.]

It is now twenty-six summers and winters since, early in our life's day, we looked upon the fields "*white unto harvest*," and resolved by Divine grace that what little lay in our power should be spent in the endeavour to bring the benign blessing—the healing rays of Gospel light and love—into some of the densely dark homes and hovels in this portion of the great city. Nor have we been disappointed. The little seed, sown in much weakness, has been suffered to yield fruit which "the day" will only fully reveal; though tears are not yet wiped from "off all faces," nor has the "desert" yet become "the garden of the Lord."

If then we have cause for thanksgiving—and we certainly have—we must nevertheless hasten to say that the aspect of things outside the comparatively little circle as yet touched either by our own or others' labours, is neither as yet very hopeful nor encouraging. We certainly felt much in sympathy with the language ascribed to Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool: "I am afraid that myriads of people keep no Sunday, never go to church or chapel, never hear the Gospel preached and die without religion. This seems a terrible conclusion, but it is useless to shut our eyes to facts." We feel inclined to concur with some others who have the care of Christian work among the masses, in feeling that there is a growing indifference among the poorer classes to attend religious meetings of any kind in order to gain a hearing for the Gospel many are cultivating adjuncts to the simple preaching of the Glad News and one fears sometimes that every other issue has been lost sight of in catering for the crowd, than that of securing an audience.

Nevertheless, for the masses to be evangelized it is certain they must be reached, and we endeavour to do so in three ways: the opening of Gospel halls for such as can be induced to attend them, the regular preaching of the Gospel in the open air, and by house to house visitation. Assisted at each centre by a goodly number of faithful workers, voluntary and other, we have happily to report that with the Divine blessing many bright cases of conversion have cheered us

(4.) * * * * * *Mission.*

[*From Report.*]

Seventeen years ago a few men and women whose hearts the Lord had touched, stood as a small band of workers at the corner of a street, night after night, singing and telling out to a crowd of poor people gathered around them the benefits of leading a Christian life. The little band increased in number, and as the nights got cold, we hired an old carpenter's shop and for eighteen months in this old shed we preached the Gospel. Unfortunately, our landlord at last pulled down the old shed, and we were turned out; but soon we found a strip of land eighty feet long and eleven feet wide, and upon this ground we started to build a wooden mission in this place we have packed one hundred and sixty people, and for twelve years we carried on this good work among the poor. God only knows the results of our labours. We have had amongst us convicted thieves, drunkards, prostitutes and know of many through our influence who have become honest and respectable members of society: many a sad story could we tell but space will not allow. We were turned out once more, but not for long. A large mission hall was given up by its members and we were fortunate enough to have the lease transferred to us. So here we are working together with one object and desire, to rescue the perishing and care for the dying, to raise up them that are cast down, to help the aged and infirm, to help the destitute children in our parish, to seek out all the little cripples and visit them, trying to let a ray of sunshine into many a dark home, and, above all, to spiritually teach those who are striving to lead a godly life.

(5.) * * * * * *Working Men's Mission.*

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever,” for in our midst we have those who have been testifying throughout the past year to the marvellous grace of God. They have been “redeemed from the hand of the enemy;” they were hungry and thirsty, their souls fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and He delivered them out of all their distresses.

“Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, because they rebelled against the words of God and contemned the counsel of the Most High,” have had the Gospel preached to them, and the way of deliverance pointed out; “then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and He brake their bands in sunder.” Many there are amongst us also who acknowledge themselves to have been “fools because of their transgression,” and great has been their afflictions as the result, but the good Lord “sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions.”

With these people “old things are passed away, behold all things are become new,” and they are now “a royal priesthood,” offering to God the well-pleasing “sacrifices of thanksgiving,” and spending their leisure time in declaring “His works with rejoicing.”

This report, so cleverly woven together out of well-known texts, was presented at a meeting; and after several speeches had been made, fifteen minutes were allowed for testimonies. It was to these testimonies that the language of the report led up, and that they were part of a pre-arranged programme is the more probable since they all came from old members, and if in truth only fifteen minutes were occupied, the shortest possible form of words must have been used for each of the fifteen testimonies recorded.

The report continues:—The first man to take this opportunity, said he was converted by the mission twenty-

one years ago; the second one was likewise brought to Christ twenty-one years ago, but had fallen back for several years, living a wretched life, and was restored to God a twelvemonth ago in the mission; the third was converted twenty years ago; the fourth said the mission-folk used to come and sing outside his house twenty years ago, and he believed the seed of divine grace was then sown in his soul; the fifth had been a usual attendant at the services for over twenty years; the sixth was converted nineteen years ago, being only a girl at the time; the seventh, fourteen years ago; the eighth, fifteen years ago; the ninth, nineteen years ago; the tenth, eighteen years; the eleventh was brought to Christ some years ago through the instrumentality of his sister, one of the previous speakers; the twelfth, eighteen years a Christian; the thirteenth, a Sister, both her and her husband converted in the mission over nineteen years ago; the fourteenth was an old Christian Sister, who was brought to Christ elsewhere over sixty years ago, but had attended the mission ever since it had been opened; the last, being the fifteenth, was the former secretary of the mission, who was brought to a knowledge of the truth twenty years ago.

The superintendent referred to the starting of the mission twenty-one years ago, when its seven founders knelt round the packing cases and prayed for the work; and his youngest son told the meeting that he had been born the night the mission was opened, and had been brought to Christ through the preaching of his father. And the report concludes:—

From the above testimonies, given at our annual gathering, it will be seen what kind of work was accomplished when the mission started; men, women, and children saved by grace and then “kept by the power of God.” We praise our heavenly Father for thus showing us “the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Jesus Christ.”

(6.) *From another mission we hear that:—*

It is the rule rather than the exception in the services that souls should publicly seek salvation, and some of

the gatherings are quite remarkable for blessing and power

At every meeting anxious souls are urged to decide at once for Christ, and invited out to the penitents' form. If a female, one of the mission sisters kneels beside her, pressing home the truth of God in relation to sin, and when the time is ripe guides the seeker to the Divine promises. The Bible is used, and the inquirer is asked to read the precious words with her own eyes. In like manner the men are taken in hand by the brothers.

The mission-workers are fully satisfied that no intellectual ability or cleverness can convince a sinner of his sins, but the Holy Ghost alone. One night a big meeting was held, on what has since been known as the "snowy Tuesday," when, owing to a heavy fall of snow, every expected speaker failed. The service was taken by the missionary and his local helpers. Soon the Holy Ghost fell on the company: two women began to cry for pardon, followed by a man. A general breakdown ensued, and before the finish eight persons had sought the Saviour.

A stranger, entering the mission, finds himself at once in an atmosphere of liberty and Christian love. Whatever his mental, moral, or social condition, here is help. The weary are rested; the troubled comforted; the tempest-tossed piloted into harbour; the outcast succoured; the penitent led to the Cross. If some who sit in ornate suburban churches, half persuaded that the Gospel is a failure, would, on some Sabbath night take a walk to town, and turn in at these lowly doors, they would learn that the Saviour still can save, and the Holy Ghost still sanctify the world's cast-offs and failures, and they would return to their cushioned pews with strengthened faith and re-invigorated zeal.

In the diary we often get a glimpse of the work :—

Wednesday, April 19th, 1882. "I held my meeting in the Ragged School to-night. I have been in the school to-day, wrestling with God that He would come to-night and do something in the hearts of the people; and bless His holy Name! He came into our midst, and blessed

every waiting soul. Two dear ones were seeking Jesus and I believe they were saved. Glory to His Name!"

Sunday, August 9th. "What a blessed time to-night; the place was filled with power. The right sort of people came in with us, and at the end of our meeting, when I invited all those that wanted to consecrate themselves to God, or to be saved, to come out to the penitent form, hallelujah! twenty-one dear ones came out, and there was great rejoicing both in our meeting and with the angels in heaven."

At this mission *all nights of prayer* have been held 'with most beneficial results.' Saturday night at 10.30 is the time generally chosen, and the meeting continues until five o'clock on Sunday morning. Quietness and freedom from interruption are secured as far as possible. Those assembling are urgently besought to be of one heart and one mind; all who are not in accord with the purpose of the service are plainly informed that their presence would be unwelcome. 'No spies wanted,' was the terse intimation on one placard. About one hundred persons usually gather, and 'the blessing has been in proportion to the faith of the supplicants.'

About two o'clock in the morning, at one of these conferences, 'men and women alike were flooded with glory. Great waves of power came rolling over the company until the place was plunged into a holy confusion, some praying, some singing, some shouting "Glory! Glory!" But despite the tumult the presence of God was so manifest that it was as heaven to the soul of every worshipper.'

(7.) That the direct interference of God in minor matters is looked for is shown by the following story, quoted from a report:—

'The brass band is doing us good service; and here let us say that our band is as much the Lord's as any part of our organization.

How we got the Drum.

Writes Brother * * * * * : "You ask me for facts connected with the drum; they are simply these. I was inspired by the morning text one recent Sunday, to promise God that I would do as He told me that day, and placed myself unreservedly in His hands. Nothing out of the ordinary happened until towards the evening, when the Lord told me that I must play a big drum! I for the first time then missed the drum [in the band], and noticed particularly the need of it, although I had not done this previously. At first the Lord's command was rather a shock to me. I answered it, however, almost audibly, as we marched along, that I would indeed play one if the drum were found. It was then I felt that I was not only to play it, but to buy it also. I immediately turned to my wife, and asked her to pray for me playing a big drum, and repeated the request to my brother when we got back to the hall. As a result of their prayers and mine, I am now the proud drummer in the * * * * * Band. It is, however, a most remarkable manner in which the Lord has blessed me since I obeyed His command, both in spiritual ways and in this world's goods, and I need hardly say how thankful I am that I was made use of by God in so answering our prayers."

It was only on the Saturday before that our band-master had been discussing the question of our much-needed drum. It was explained that no one was so much interested in our band as Jesus Christ, and that if our band just kept right we should get the drum; but as to paying for one, that was out of the question; but we could pray about it. Of this conversation Brother * * * * * was totally ignorant, and so was everybody save our Heavenly Father, who knew that we had need of *this thing*.—(*From a Missioner's Report.*)

(8.) One feature of mission productions is, as a rule, their simplicity and directness of statement. An ingenuous faith makes itself felt, even through obvious exaggerations. The egregious pretentiousness and conceit of the following is thus somewhat exceptional :—

The * * * * * Christian Mission is set for the spiritual, social, and educational elevation of the multitudes. The promoters of the mission seek the *all-round* happiness of the people. The Son of God never flew from yonder sapphire throne to our relief to save souls! His mission was to seek and to save men and women just as they are—spirit, soul, and body! Man's tripartite nature is a unity. What God has joined together, let no man put asunder! We seek to bring:—
 (1) Peace to burdened and weary spirits. (2) Child-like submission to stubborn souls. (3) Food, raiment, and health to the bodies of men, which, when consecrated to His blessed service, are the **TEMPLES OF GOD UPON EARTH**. God help us to live and toil and die in seeking and saving the teeming, untutored multitudes for whom Jesus died.

The unique history of the Church of Christ worshipping in * * * * * Assembly Hall, and of the * * * * * Cross Christian Mission, forms one of the most vivid illustrations of the beneficent, yet mysterious, operations of the Divine Providence to be found in the wonderful annals of metropolitan mission enterprise.

A Glorious Mission.

During portions of the years 1888-9, an extensive evangelistic mission was conducted by the writer in Chelsea Great audiences assembled on Lord's Day evenings to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed in all its pristine simplicity and fulness In many quarters the mission was considered to be one of the most blessed and glorious ever held in the west of the metropolis By a really remarkable chain of providential circumstances, we were during this evangelistic campaign introduced to representatives of a little mission conducted by working lads, varying in age from twelve to eighteen, in * * * * * The immediate result was that, one bright Lord's Day we wended our way to the mission-room to deliver a special address We had several earnest conversations with the leading spirits of the little mission, in the course of which we endeavoured to teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly, even as Aquila and Priscilla instructed Apollos eighteen

centuries ago. They listened, open Bible in hand, with wonder, love, and prayer, and speedily expressed themselves as ready to follow the Lamb whithersoever He would lead them

At * * * * Street Chapel, Chelsea, at the close of the monthly early morning prayer meeting six young penitent believers confessed their faith and their attachment to the Divine Redeemer before a cloud of witnesses, and at half-past nine o'clock were immersed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, according to the Scriptures of the New Will. It was a real consecration service. The joy of these dear lads absolutely knew no bounds At the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper which immediately followed, these six little citizens of the Kingdom of Grace presented themselves at the table of their once crucified, but now risen and ascended King, to receive the right hand of fellowship and a cordial welcome into the sheltered home of the Christian Church.

Whilst filling their places at * * * * * on Lord's Day mornings, to attend to "the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers" for the development of their spiritual life and increase in the knowledge of God and Christ Jesus, they continued their mission operations in * * * * *

In the meantime, the evangelistic campaign at the * * * * * Town Hall and * * * * * Street Chapel had been prosecuted with ever-increasing momentum. The saints of the pioneer church, under whose auspices it was conducted, were banded together in one heart and soul to extend far and wide the simple faith of the ancient Gospel, and that to a degree quite unprecedented in her wonderful history. All the gatherings seemed charged with spiritual electricity, and the glory of the Lord filled the church

During the course of the mission thus concluded, we had been brought into very close contact with many phases of some of the most pressing problems, of this vast city. Our spirit gradually became consumed with an unquenchable desire to undertake something for the alleviation of the social conditions of the deserving and distressed poor The determination to make London, the

city of our nativity, the headquarters of our evangelistic labours, had always been with us from the hour in which we started out upon our public career as an honorary evangelist of the Cross

Thus we were gradually led to determine to inaugurate, by Divine aid, a comprehensive mission in London In order to accomplish this, we constantly laid our burning desire before Almighty God, earnestly seeking further guidance

In the meantime (some years had elapsed), the band of mission workers, meeting in * * * * * had moved into more commodious premises, and other useful converts from the Chelsea Mission had become associated with them

How majestically and wonderfully up to this point had the Divine spirit moved on in the good order of His providential arrangements! He had furnished us with provincial experience He had opened up the way for the blessed mission in * * * * * Town Hall He had turned our footsteps He had introduced us to new phases of mission work He had revealed to us startlingly some of those horrible mysteries of London life He had brought us face to face with many of the burning problems He had planted in our souls an undying resolve to live, labour, and die, if need be, in the service of the people of this great city. He had clearly demonstrated He had enabled us to see He had further caused us He had led us to realize and had then gently carried us forward Such are but a few of the more prominent features of the Holy Spirit's operations concerning us, which have evolved the glorious work calling for the issue of the report, of which this history forms the introduction.

(9.) Hardly less objectionable for fulsomeness of language are the extracts which follow, culled from the reports of another mission. The recurring laudation in each successive report seems to show that it was considered strictly due, and that the missionary referred to made no objection :

[*Report 1896-7.*]

The unique feature of the * * * * * Mission is that the whole of the income of the mission is entirely devoted to the various branches of the work, every penny received being rightly applied and accounted for.

The evangelist being cast upon the Lord for the means necessary for his support, the mission is relieved of what would otherwise be a direct charge upon its funds. For twenty years he has thus lived "the life of faith," refusing any stated salary while carrying on the work of the Lord. . . . Mr. * * * * * has been ably seconded by his beloved wife and other devoted voluntary helpers

[*Report 1897-8.*]

"Patient continuance in well-doing" is the concise summary of another year's labours by the esteemed evangelist, Mr. * * * * * and his devoted wife, who continue to live amongst the people they are seeking to serve. After twenty-one years' residence and ministry in this district there is no abatement of zeal, and no relaxation of effort. Never was the evangelist more in earnest to carry the message of the Gospel to those who are living "without God and without hope in the world," the success of his labours being a constant inspiration to self-sacrificing devotion and service.

The mission hall is a centre of spiritual influence, and a sphere of evangelistic activity for the Christian workers who rejoice in their fellowship with an evangelist whose consecration to the work of soul-winning the Lord has so greatly owned and blessed. The following agencies attest the vitality and importance of the mission

In personally directing all these agencies, Mr. * * * * * has endeared himself to all who know "his godly walk and conversation;" and his unwearied devotion has won the admiration even of those who make no profession of religion.

How greatly God has honoured him and his beloved wife, as agents of blessing to the souls of both adults and children, only Eternity will reveal. Every year has brought its record of conversions and the restoration of backsliders, the year that has just closed having been as fruitful as any of its predecessors. To God be all the praise.

The committee have unabated confidence in the evangelist, for whom they bespeak the loving sympathy and generous co-operation of all who rejoice in the good work of maintaining an earnest unsectarian Gospel ministry amongst the very poor.

As the evangelist is cast upon the Lord by faith for the necessary means of his support, all moneys contributed are applied to the general purposes of the mission. With a larger income the usefulness of the mission can be largely increased. Verily, "The fields are white unto the harvest," and for this consecrated worker already in the field the committee would bespeak a constant interest in the prayers of the Lord's people for an abounding and an abiding blessing. "Brethren, pray for us."

[*Report 1898-9.*]

The mission hall is not only a hive of Christian activity, but the centre of a network of evangelistic agencies affecting a large neighbourhood of very poor people.

With untiring zeal Mr. * * * * * directs every department of the mission, and he is beloved and honoured by all who know him. "We seek not yours, but you," is a watchword which has never been modified from the commencement of the mission in 1877; and the people to whom he ministers have never had occasion to call it into question.

Cast upon the Lord for the supply of his needs, he has been content to give himself wholly to the work, and has never appealed to those whom he serves for a single penny towards his support. The Lord, who has so graciously sustained His servant, has by many remarkable providences set the seal of His approval and the crown of His blessing to this "work of faith and labour of love."

Mrs. * * * * * is equally devoted to the work of the mission, their joint labours being crowned with results which have caused the thanksgiving of many to redound to the glory of God. • • •

The work of the committee in supervising the accounts has been a joyous service; but there is a feeling of regret that the good work has not been more widely extended. With an increase of funds more could be accomplished;

and the committee would earnestly appeal for regular contributions from the Lord's people whose constant prayer is "Thy kingdom come."

In connection with every agency the evangelist reports the most encouraging results. Names and addresses of the converts have been registered; but Eternity only the full extent of the work will reveal.

In relinquishing the senior girls' class in the Sunday school the teacher writes: "I was much gratified, two Sundays ago, in asking a show of hands of all who had definitely accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, explaining clearly and solemnly what I meant, that out of a large class only two or three failed to hold up their hands. I do not mention this in any way as connected with my teaching, but as the result of the work in Mrs. * * * * *'s class, from which they were drafted, confirming my long-felt belief that a beautiful and blessed work is being carried on by her. I pray that the Lord of the Harvest may send you some one better qualified than myself to fill the place I vacate, and also that He might all through life's eventide graciously crown all your work for Him by a great ingathering of precious souls."

(10.) It is refreshing to turn instead to the following:—

Mission Report.

The report of the * * * * * Mission for 1898 can but record the same story as those of past years—the story of the ever faithful goodness and kindness of God.

It is no small matter to be able, year after year, to tell of quiet progress in the work, of evidences of the converting grace of God, and of the continued supply of ever recurring needs.

Most of our readers know that the mission premises stand right in the midst of a large and crowded neighbourhood, where poverty, sin, and misery abound on every hand.

The mission hall affords to many the "only bit of peace in all the week," and there, day after day, to men, women, and children, Jesus Christ is preached—the Saviour and Friend of sinners, is preached. Thank God for those who, out of the depths of sin and misery, turn

the eye of faith to Him—they find Him an all sufficient Saviour.

It is the work of our mission to bring the Gospel to such sad hearts as these, to stretch out a helping hand to those ready to sink under the hopelessness of their lives, and, as far as means will allow, to relieve want and distress.

Out of doors, our missionary and two Biblewomen are busy all the week, looking after the members of the various meetings, visiting the sick, and distributing tracts and notices of the meetings, from house to house, and from room to room.

The open-air preachers—mostly men and lads who have been brought to the knowledge of Christ in the mission—are earnest in proclaiming the Gospel message at the street corner twice every week through the summer months.

Indoors, the steady good attendance at the meetings is most encouraging.

The hall is generally well filled on Sunday evenings, and the numbers attending the Wednesday evening services are good and increasing.

The mothers' meetings are always happy times.

During the winter we sometimes have from 120 to 130 present on Monday afternoon; in the spring and summer perhaps not more than seventy or eighty.

The Tuesday meeting is a smaller one, at present the numbers vary from sixty to seventy.

The same women are not allowed to join both meetings.

There are clubs connected with the mothers' meetings for clothing, bedding, &c., and coals.

There is also a goose club for the weeks preceding Christmas, and during the spring and summer a children's holiday fund.

We get the benefit of these last two clubs through the Shaftesbury Society (Ragged School Union), and both are most popular.

The men's meeting on Monday evening is not large—seldom exceeding thirty present; but the eager desire of the Christian men for any instruction that will help them to understand their Bibles, the simple testimonies of

those who have but lately found the Saviour, the earnestness of the prayers, and the heartiness of the singing, render the meeting full of life and interest.

We believe that all these meetings for men and women are used of God to the conversion of souls.

The little band of earnest-hearted believers amongst us steadily grows.

Sometimes the change of heart and life comes so gradually that we hardly know how it takes place; sometimes the transition is quick and striking.

Three months ago one of the worst drunkards in the street sat in the after-meeting in great distress of soul. He went out of the hall at last, saying he believed God had saved him. He has kept from the drink ever since, attends the meetings, and spends his few evenings poring over his Bible instead of in the public-house. May God grant that, in the year upon which we have just entered, he may go on to prove the reality and depth of the change wrought in him.

The work among the young people is not less encouraging.

The Sunday school is well filled and in excellent order, with an average attendance of 394 scholars.

In the midst of them there is a little company of boys and girls who have given their hearts to the Lord Jesus, and are seeking to live for Him. In the open-air season we discovered that, during the preaching, three or four little lads were visiting the neighbouring public-houses, taking tracts to the occupants of the bar, and telling them it was "all for Jesus."

Two or three older scholars have this year entered the service of the Master as teachers.

A week-night Bible class for young women, opened in the month of July, has met a long-felt need.

On Friday we get our poor, rough and ragged children in such numbers that often we cannot admit all who present themselves at the door.

"I heard about your mission hall," said a little girl at one of the meetings, "and that you told the children about Jesus, and so I came, for I want to know more about Him."

"I want to be good," said a poor boy at the same

meeting. "When mother put us in the workhouse we almost forgot the wicked words, but now we are learning them again, and I don't want to, I want to be good." The same desire is often plainly written on many an upturned face amongst these poor neglected boys and girls, so familiar with sin from their earliest days.

Dr. Barnardo and Mr. Fegan are very kind in receiving, from time to time, specially destitute cases into their sheltering homes. For the rest, what can we do but go on telling them "about Jesus," concerning whom it is written that "He is able to save to the uttermost"?

We trust that the few lines of this report may serve to interest the kind friends and supporters of the * * * * * Mission. We thank them most heartily for their help during the past year, and ask for their prayers and continued sympathy.

We are very grateful for various gifts of new and old clothing, books, toys, old Christmas cards, coal and blanket tickets, hospital and convalescent letters, &c., for all of which there is a constant demand.

We also acknowledge, with many thanks, £1 from * * * * * towards the ragged children's tea, and 5s from a friend for a Christmas dinner for a poor family.

We send very many thanks, too, to the "Boys and Girls attending the Board School, * * * * *, Norfolk," for two large boxes of beautiful spring flowers sent for the Friday ragged children. We only wish the country boys and girls could have seen the excitement at the distribution, and the pleasure all down the street as the children ran home, each carrying a good big bunch of fresh, sweet flowers.

Finance: General Fund.—Regarding the question of funds, our receipts, as will be seen on reference to the balance sheet, amounted to £188. 7s 7d for the year under review. This includes, in addition to the annual subscriptions (page 14), a grant of £10 from the Ragged School Union—now known as the Shaftesbury Society—and more than £20 freewill offerings from our own people.

Our expenses for the year amounted to £167. 15s 1d, or about £12 less than last year. This enables us to carry forward a balance of £15. 4s 5d.

It should, however, be explained that, it having been

decided to close the accounts in future punctually on December 31st in each year, certain payments, which had hitherto been included, are omitted from these accounts, and will appear amongst the expenses for 1899, and will thus absorb a considerable part of the balance now carried forward.

Also, it has not been necessary to spend so much upon repairs to the premises this year as we had to do last year; otherwise, the ordinary expenses have really been greater than last year owing to the growth of the work, as will be seen by comparing the various items in the account with those of the previous year.

(11.) * * * * * *Artisans Young Men's Christian Association.*

. We are an association, all Christian young men and total abstainers, who believe that they have been saved for a purpose, and that purpose is to win other young men for Christ, as we feel this to be a work for young men to be done by young men

Tuesday evening training class—(Gospel service rehearsal).

This is a work which we call "Our College." It is here that we have some of the rough material, and after some polishing they are able to go about as preachers of the Gospel of Christ. It may be asked how it is done? Well, immediately we have a young convert join our ranks, our desire is to make use of him for the extension of our Redeemer's kingdom on earth. We therefore ask him to book a date, any Tuesday evening he wishes, and when his time arrives he delivers a Gospel address, or rather conducts a Gospel meeting, the same as he would do if asked to take one at some mission hall. He commences at 8.15 and is supposed to close at 8.45, dividing his time up, the first fifteen minutes with hymn, prayer, and reading; the second fifteen minutes a Gospel address. When he is finished the meeting is open for all the members to criticize him, but in brotherly love; showing him his errors and faults, and by this means many young men have become really good preachers, and some of them have left us for a larger sphere of usefulness. God has blessed this work abundantly to the young men who are willing to be trained for service for Him.

The result seems to be general evangelistic work almost professional in character. The report continues:

We have had a successful year We have held about one hundred and thirty meetings and have visited nearly every part of London, taking services in churches, chapels, and mission halls, as the Lord has opened the door to us. Our men have not had a college education, but are working men who have for the most part been brought to the Saviour in our midst, and have been led to take up some definite work for God, and by means of the Bible class and training class and personal study of the Word of God, with much prayer, have so educated themselves as to be able to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ acceptably We have no new Gospel, we believe the old, old Gospel As to our success, we cannot very well measure, for here we only know part, but when we get to glory we shall know all. But we have been permitted by the grace of God to lead many precious souls to the Saviour.

Stories are told of cases of conversion among women and children, of exceptionally hysterical character, in connection with these services. The work among themselves is happily very different, as is shown by the "Report of the Young Men's Bible class"—

We call our class a conversational Bible class, and our method of conducting it is as follows: We meet at 8.15 p.m., and the first fifteen minutes is spent in prayer, the next fifteen minutes is taken up by one of the young men to open the subject (both the subject and the opener for the quarter, have been chosen in advance). It is then left for the members to ask any questions, or search deeper into the Word, and it often becomes so interesting that at 9.30, when we close our meeting, we wish we had only just begun. We have taken a variety of subjects, and in fact if any member wishes a particular subject to be opened, we always try to have it in our next quarter's programme. We endeavour to keep our studies as close to the Word of God as we can, for we know that there and there alone is the safe field of study.

The Lord has wonderfully blessed our class in the

instruction of our young men and established them in the word of truth, and many have testified to the great blessing and teaching they have received. We feel that if the class is in a good spiritual condition, the association will also be in good spiritual health, for if our young men love and study their Bible, they will also be able to live the Christ-like life and spread the Word of God to those around them.

(12.) *An appeal.*

WHAT WE GREATLY NEED:

SHOES FOR NAKED FEET,
COALS FOR EMPTY GRATES,
FOOD FOR EMPTY STOMACHS,
FURNITURE FOR EMPTY ROOMS,
MONEY FOR EMPTY POCKETS.
[*From a Report.*]

(13.) *Relief of distress.*

He that commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shone into many a heart and home in this teeming East End. Where there was darkness there is now dawn. We have to record another year of effort and success. During last winter our workers found much distress among the poor, and, as far as our funds would allow, these were relieved with tickets for bread, provisions, coal and soup. Christ-like work among the suffering poor of East London. Surgical letters have been in great demand this year. A missionary writes: "As I was engaged in my work, a most wretched specimen of humanity came up to me and asked me for a maternity letter. She was simply awful, and knowing her circumstances, I at once said, 'Yes, I will get you one by Sunday,' because reasoning from past experience I knew where I could get one. In this respect the Rev. J. W. Atkinson is always accessible. He is like his Master, always willing to help in time of trouble."

The thousands of dinners given on Christmas Day were highly prized. The soup and bread distribution is eagerly sought for; several whole families relying on this for their Sunday dinners. One poor fellow said: "Thank

God, there is such an institution as the Rev. J. W. Atkinson's East London Mission, or else such people as us and our families would have to go into the workhouse."

I will just mention one ordinary case which will illustrate many. A family of six living in one room, nearly starving; husband cannot get work; wife care-worn, worried, almost weary of life; a sick babe at the breast and a child of three ill in the room. The home almost bare—furniture and clothing, and even the boots from the poor woman's feet, pledged for food and firing; six weeks' rent owing and no prospect of paying it. This, alas, is one case among thousands.

(14.) *Hunger.*

I can say from my own knowledge, that I have known numbers of the poor who have never fully satisfied the cravings of hunger. It is little use preaching to such people about their spiritual condition when their physical state is so deplorable. Abject poverty is an evil, and though I never regarded our mission as designed to annihilate it, neither do I look upon our work as an almsgiving institution, yet I do feel that our mission has its place in the amelioration of our social system. How could I say to such "be ye warmed and filled," and leave them in deep misery and want.—*From the Report of a Unitarian Missioner.*

(15.) *Discrimination in charitable work.*

It is not for your committee to discuss the causes of this poverty and misery but it is for your committee to say that the experience of your missionaries enables them to discriminate between the poverty which is the fruit of vice and indolence, and that which comes on a man through sheer misfortune and the grip of forces with which he has been too weak to cope. In this way they have in the mission an agency which is a real helper and a true friend.

Your missionaries are able to throw a flood of light upon a class too little known or considered—the class of struggling independent poor.* These are not to be found in published statistics. Their struggles and sufferings find no record in the returns of the Poor Law Guardians. If relief agencies are opened they do not frequent them.

They shrink from becoming dependent on the charitable. Cases of a kind not widely different to these must come within the experience of everyone who is at the pains to go about at all among the poor, or whose vocation brings him in contact with them. They are deserving of the utmost respect and the utmost sympathy. They are deserving also of such aid as can be given without loss of self-respect. Such aid is best given—in some cases it can only be given—by personal intercourse and charity, the friendly and discriminating charity which takes the trouble—worth more than any money—of personally inquiring into the whole of the circumstances, and which gives sympathy along with its aid.—*From the Report of the London Domestic Mission (Unitarian).*

CHAPTER VIII

OTHER RELIGIOUS EFFORT

AND SOCIAL WORK CONNECTED WITH RELIGION

§ 1

THE SALVATION ARMY

THE Salvation Army had its rise in East London, and London, which was the first, remains for it a most important field of work; but has now become also the centre and headquarters of a world-wide organization. No religious phenomenon of our day is more remarkable than this development. Only the London portion of the work immediately concerns us here, but to understand its character, and the changes that have occurred in it, some reference to the other developments is necessary. To be fairly appreciated the work must be regarded in its entirety.

It has three aspects: that of a Gospel mission, that of a religious community, and that of an organization for social work; but these, though distinct and tending to become more so, are closely interconnected. At the outset the last mentioned was unknown, and there was, perhaps, no distinction between the other two. When in 1865 the Rev. William Booth abandoned his previous religious ties and, "beholding the churchless and Christless crowds of East London, took his stand for Christ on Mile End Waste, and, aided by God and the Holy Ghost and with an open Bible, began to win

souls," and when the Army he commanded consisted of about thirty individuals, their sole idea was to preach and spread the Gospel ; urging upon all the need of salvation and setting forth the appointed way. They wrought for the salvation of individual souls, but did not rest there. Those won over were expected to join forthwith in the winning of other souls, so that their numbers might, it was hoped, follow a law of geometric progression, and the band of workers increase like a rolling snowball. All around them were those who 'knew not Christ' or were indifferent to His Gospel, living in sin, unaroused to their souls' danger. By accepting the salvation offered, men were to put themselves in harmony with God ; and by joining in the work of spreading the truth, were to enter His service. They were to become soldiers of Christ—the Devil being the enemy and the whole world their battlefield.

But the immediate point of attack was East London. It was recognised that, then as now, amongst the most crowded and characteristic population of the capital city of a nominally Christian country, the vast majority were quite unmoved by the ideas accounted as all important in the religious world. Yet every parish had its Established Church, and in every part there were numerous chapels belonging to various sects wherein the self-same faith was upheld, and even missions abounded. In its broad lines the same Gospel of man's redemption by the blood of Christ was preached in all. Thus some new method of presentment seemed to be needed, which should arouse attention and strike the imagination, something that the most ignorant could understand, the most besotted feel, and the most hardened be unable to ignore. *War* had to be waged against sin and its consequences. The metaphor was in common use : there was scriptural injunction to fight the good fight of faith ; men spoke of the 'banner of Christ ;' and the organization of an

Army was boldly selected as suiting the purpose. Unquestioning obedience to their superior officers was demanded from those who took executive positions, discipline and self-devotion from all ; while the mutual bond and its purpose were signalized by the wearing of a uniform graded according to rank, and the militant spirit was maintained by marching through the streets to tap of drum or sound of music. All the world could see and hear the soldiers as they passed along, and from any street corner where they upraised their flag the Divine Tidings should sound forth. They gloried in the public profession of their faith, and felt it no shame to kneel in prayer on the pavement, and call in impassioned tones on God and man to hear. No time could be ill-chosen, no place unsuitable, for the delivery of God's message or for the exercises of their religion. To enter their chamber and pray in secret to the God who seeth in secret might be needed for their own spiritual welfare, but not in that way could they hope to reach the perishing souls around them. It was not 'to be thought well of by man' that they prayed in public and wore phylacteries of red and yellow. Abuse at first was common, gibes and scoffing were their daily portion, and from hardly any did they receive sympathy. Their proceedings were coarsely ridiculed at harmonic meetings in the public-houses, and in the music-halls, and were parodied on the march by 'skeleton' armies organized by *habitues* of tap-rooms of the lower order. Individual Salvationists were often very roughly used, and sometimes stones were thrown. It was in the martyr spirit, not that of the pharisee, that they displayed their religion.

In what they did there was much to shock feelings of reverence for sacred things, much that might irritate the man of culture and raise ungodly laughter in the worldling. The prolonged parody of military terms, as in speaking of prayer as 'knee drill' and 'volley

firing,' of 'barracks' and of 'citadels,' of 'war cries' and 'ammunition,' of 'attacks—strategic and frontal,' and the rest of it, lent itself freely to derision, while the use of every military designation, from those of soldier and recruit and cadet up to colonel and general, struck a further note of absurdity. But the system was deliberately adopted with a popular aim, and by persistency and good faith has gradually won acceptance from all. Of the genuineness and honesty of the attempt there can be no question. Moreover, the mark was hit. The Army has been entirely successful in bringing the Gospel of Salvation freshly and simply to the notice of all, and especially to the notice of the classes standing aloof. This being so, it becomes the more remarkable that, as regards spreading the Gospel in London, in any broad measure, the movement has altogether failed.

Marvellous as has been the growth of the Army in numbers and in the scope of its work, it remains encamped in what must still be regarded as the enemy's country, and the increase in its militant strength has not by any means kept pace with the increase in the territory it seeks to cover. Its growth has not been that of the rolling snowball, but rather that of a plant which contends with other plants of stronger, or equally strong, growth, and in its spreading continually seeks fresh soil. Progress in any particular place has been slow or fitful, alternating with retrogression. The point is soon reached at which all that can be done has been done, and only with great difficulty is the work maintained at the highest level attained. As regards London the failure is palpable. Constant changes are made in the *personnel*, partly as a measure of discipline, no doubt, in order to maintain the feeling of dependence on headquarters, but also quite necessarily for the sake of vigour; fresh life having to be stirred up every nine months or so, by changing the officers in charge.

But it is all in vain, and from year to year most of the corps lead a struggling existence. That the officers retain their hopeful faith is a wonderful proof of the genuineness of their convictions and of the strength of their loyalty to the Army, but probably the frequent changes of locality help them in this. It takes time to realize a failure and, in dealing with the failures of someone else, each starts afresh. •

Nor is it entirely failure. The Salvation Army corps, like the other missions already described, are able to draw to themselves some sympathetic souls whom the ways of the Army suit and who find in it their spiritual home. In this respect it is at least as successful as any other body. The greater number of its adherents are found amongst religious, or naturally religious-minded people, but there are others who are genuine converts—drunkards reclaimed, or sinners startled out of self-complacency—a remnant of whom find in the Army a permanent anchorage, and pass into its working force; while others, it may be most, slip away or relapse, and perhaps repent and rejoin, only to relapse again. A few of the corps, specially favoured by their surroundings, have grown into regular congregations. In these cases they consist of the better sort of working-class people, both men and women, including domestic servants, but not of ‘the poor’ nor to any great extent of those reclaimed by the Army. They still march and preach and pray in the streets, but the character of the work changes, and in two instances the connection with the central organization has been severed. The life of such a congregation becomes sufficient unto itself.

As a Gospel mission in London the Salvation Army is remarkable for the number of its stations (only less than those of the City Mission); for the purely religious character which these maintain, and the multiplicity of their services in-doors and out, on

Sundays and on weekdays ; and for the pertinacity with which the work is carried on in the face of much discouragement. I must myself have stood thirty times or more in the fringe of children and passers-by who gather round, where, at some street corner, the band of Salvationists form a ring, into the middle of which one after another steps forward to speak or pray or lead the hymn, while the others support his words with pious ejaculations, or join in the singing, or beat time on their tambourines, or accompany the voices with triumphant trumpet note or clash of cymbal. There is much to arouse curiosity ; anyone unaccustomed to these proceedings would hardly fail to join the circle and linger a little, for this reason alone. But it is rare for anyone to stay long. Never have I seen the slightest sign of interest beyond such as could find full expression by the addition of a penny or so to the collection gathered in. Nor is this to be wondered at. Very seldom have the spoken words either life or power. They may once have been, they may even still be, genuine expressions of feeling, but used and heard again and again, as they necessarily must be, they come to have no more effect and little more character than the utterances of a megaphone. If anything attracts it is the music. Some of the corps have excellent bands of instrumentalists, the singing is hearty, and sometimes solos are very well given. A crowd will then gather, especially if the pitch be in some popular resort or busy thoroughfare. But for the Gospel nothing visible is done. Those present are invited to come to the barracks, and thither the Salvationists march, singing as they go. But the crowd, if there has been one, disperses and goes its way, and only a ragged tail of children accompanies the march.

Still, the out-door work serves as an advertisement, and though the Salvationists themselves form the major

part of the audience indoors, strangers do come in. Outside, the stranger is the passer-by who halts a moment to hear what is going on ; inside, too, some come from curiosity, and there are those who 'drop in,' especially on Sunday evening, after having attended some other place of worship ; while others, again, especially among the poor, are drawn in by the warmth of welcome. Of 'cadging' there is very little. The curious spectator may be attracted by what is unusual in them, but abiding interest there is none. It is difficult to maintain freshness. The repetition of the same thing time after time becomes painfully mechanical both indoors and out.

The services, whether in the 'barracks' or in the open air, by no means exhaust the corps' programme. The following diary, which is referred to as "an attempt to put into the form of a table an ordinary week's fighting engagements of a captain in charge of a corps containing a hundred soldiers," appears in one of the Army's publications.

Officer's Diary for One Week.

MONDAY.

Arose at 7 a.m.—A good night's rest after yesterday—hard but happy night—Began the week in faith for a time of great blessing
 9 a.m.—Visited Sunday's converts—Saw them during the breakfast hour. We had cheer and prayer. Then went visiting Soldiers and Recruits who were prevented from attending meetings—Found three sick
 1 p.m.—Hour for dinner. Found wife had been dealing with a backslider—a poor woman who appears to be very easily driven back.
 Afternoon resting.
 7 p.m.—Open-Air—Boro' Lane—great impression made by one of last night's converts, who testified.
 8 p.m.—Indoor Meeting—The converted Irishman and two saved foot-lallers testified—spoke myself on Prodigals—had two at Mercy-seat—one from a Lodging-house—found he was a poor backslider.
 9.45 p.m.—On way home from Meeting visited two backsliders—they were very grateful for my visit.

• TUESDAY.

After breakfast and family prayer answered correspondence from D.O.—
 • went to see Mr. Thomson concerning work for last night's Lodging-house man—got him fixed up.
 10.30 a.m.—Went to see a gentleman with reference to the taking of a small room down among the navvies who are opening up the new line—look building.

Afternoon.—Visited from door to door—saw twenty-five families and prayed with them.

Evening.—Soldiers' Meeting—spoke to them on responsibility for the drunken classes.

9.30 p.m.—Held Census Meeting to consider condition of Roll Book—found it was necessary to specially look up several backsliders and to follow down one or two offended. Local Officers appear to feel the burden of the Corps.

WEDNESDAY.

After breakfast visited Soldiers and Recruits.

Afternoon.—Crys delivered. Wife and self busy with them—folding, &c., until 4.30.

Night —Children's special Band of Love Meeting at 6.30—gave tea and drills.

Senior Meeting. Spoke on 'God's open door'—also had good powerful three-minute addresses from six Bandsmen—finished at 9.30 with one good case at the Mercy-seat.

THURSDAY.

Was called up about 3 o'clock in the morning to visit a dying man—often been to our barracks—was with him until he died at 7. After breakfast went visiting.

Afternoon —Held Cottage Meeting amongst some old cottagers—had sixteen present—one old woman converted.

Evening.—Salvation Meeting—, of a runaway girl—just starting a life of ill-fame—took her back to her home sixteen miles off by last train to-night. Tired, but happy.

FRIDAY.

10 a.m.—Attended Officers' Council—Divisional Officer gave explanations *re* New Scheme and told me the Target for my Corps—saw Divisional Officer on important question.

Afternoon.—Visited the navvy quarter and managed to have a word with several of their wives—sold Crys and got a promise from several that they would attend Saturday night's Free-and-Easy.

Special preparation for Holiness Meeting.

7.15 p.m.—Local Officers' Meeting.

8 p.m.—Holiness Meeting.

9.30 p.m.—Made up Corps Books. Found Soldiers were doing much better in giving, as a result of a talk of a few weeks ago.

SATURDAY.

Assisting wife with house-cleaning till mid-day—gave special attention to Barracks windows.

Afternoon —Went with four Soldiers to gates of football-field. Sold sixty-five Crys, and spoke to several persons about Salvation. Special thought and reflection *re* Sunday's Meetings.

7 p.m.—Open-Air, Market-place.

8 p.m.—Free-and-Easy. Had several navvies present—got one converted.

9.45 p.m.—Had an hour's special dealing with God *re* Sunday.

SUNDAY.

7 a.m.—Knee-Drill.

8.15 a.m.—Breakfast.

10 a.m.—Open-Air Meeting.

11 a.m.—Holiness Meeting.

12.45 p.m.—Dinner.

2 p.m.—Four Company Open-Airs—ten Soldiers in each. Wife conducted Open-Air with Converts.

3 to 3.30 p.m.—Attended Junior Meeting—examined Register.

3 p.m.—Wife did first part of Adult Meeting.

3.30 p.m.—I conducted latter part of Adult Meeting—had forty-five testimonies.

4.15 p.m.—Met three Corps Cadets and gave them counsel.

5 p.m.—Tea.

5.30 p.m.—Met Bandsmen and had special prayer with them.

5.45 p.m.—Open-Air.

6.30 p.m.—Salvation Meeting.

8 p.m.—Prayer Meeting. Held on until 9.45—got five persons to seek Salvation. Accompanied two Converts home, and reached quarters at 10.30. Rather weary, but cheered.

Consider what it is to sustain such work as this! Still the existence of the Salvation Army as a religious community is far more noteworthy than its action as a Gospel mission. Indeed, tested by results, the highest value attaching to the mission efforts lies in their use in binding the community together, and even in this respect Gospel mission activity is being gradually superseded by the social side of the work. Although London seems, as regards the spread of the Gospel faith, to be an exploited failure, it is still, by way of reaction and rebound, a glorious recruiting ground. From it are drawn large numbers of those who carry the war into other lands. From London they go out and to London they return. Headquarters are here. And as regards social work, London holds the first place. Thus, though the organization extends to forty-seven countries, and the work is carried on in thirty languages, London is concerned in all that is done.

The Army is the latest born of religious communities. Under its present name it has hardly yet seen a quarter of a century. For eight years before, and for as many after, it led a struggling existence, but since then its growth and consolidation have been a marvel. The words of its founder are fairly justified when, writing in 1900, he says, "I question whether any religious movement as carefully organized, as strongly knit together, and as firmly foundationed in common sense and Divine truth, was ever set forth upon its beneficent

path in the world in the same space of time as the Salvation Army." It at any rate must be placed among the most remarkable developments of the kind that the world has ever seen. The founder speaks, too, with reason, of the vast amount of profitable labour called forth—"labour as much inspired and directed, and as necessary to the establishment and prosperity of the Kingdom of Heaven on the Earth as the more spiritual exercises of preaching and praying." When he proceeds to enumerate the fifteen thousand army officers drawn from the ranks of the people—sinners seeking salvation, or men and women longing to be saints—to be educated, trained and commissioned, appointed to their respective commands, and maintained; and the fifty thousand local officers who have to be directed and supervised; and when he refers to the provision of the buildings required and the raising of the funds needed, "vast sums being contributed out of their poverty by the poor," together with the creation of a complete system of control of expenditure, he does not at all exaggerate the magnitude of the achievement. Soldiers as well as officers are subjected to discipline, and must sign "Articles of war," which "set forth the Doctrines they profess to believe and the duties they are expected to perform," and they are then sworn in "under the Flag of the Army to be faithful unto death." A smile may be raised by a reference to "the two thousand 'three hundred pages of orders and regulations," and the "many thousands of distinct rules of life and work, applicable to the different types of soldiers and officers," and to various phases of action; but the confidence and good faith shown is beyond cavil, and the spirit which dictated the hand-book called "Servants of All," from which the following extracts are taken, lifts the subject above ridicule.

Here is told something of common lives beautified, exalted, enobled by a lofty purpose. . . . I write that

God may be glorified, that the faith and courage of His saints may, in these days of low ideals, be strengthened

To us who still believe in the levelling, conquering power of the Divine Nazarene, the secret is revealed the working of this spirit which so willingly becomes the servant of all It is the incarnation of a lofty ideal.

“The universal compulsion of the souls of men”—“to subdue a rebellious world to God,” this then is the idea underlying the Salvation Army. Great thoughts command great sacrifices, and in this thought has appeared the attraction which has won to lives of self-denial the great majority of the men and women who have become the officers and leaders “*The Cross is the attraction*,” said one of our dying comrades. So it seemed to him in the little Indian village hut, which presently became the gateway of the city of God. Christ gave Himself for the world, He asks that those who have given themselves to Him will do the same thing That is the root idea of every true Salvation Army officer’s consecration. He may or may not see whither it will lead him, but he begins there. The Cross, the sacrifice, the suffering, the surrender, the abnegation, attracts him. The example of the dying Saviour, breaking His heart for a sinful world, stands out before everything else, and demands: “I suffered this for thee, what hast thou done after this sort for Me.”

From the other side—the inside—what is the dominating thought? Why this: that a common simple man or woman, wholly devoted to the love and service of souls, may be qualified successfully to win and train them for God. Little by little the conception has grown A servant of God, and a servant of the common people, living amongst them, such a one must be a fisher of men, in touch with them and yet above them, an example to them, a friend, an adviser, confessing their sins, pleading for them at the Throne of Mercy, sharing their sorrows, rebuking and warning them in truth, albeit with tears, a faithful messenger of the Cross, a shepherd of the sheep, caring for the household of faith, patient, kind, a leader of the Lord’s host, the servant of all.

depend, is more and more accepted every day. "Oneness of spirit and of aim permeates all ranks ;" "officers and soldiers alike are studying all the time how more effectually to bless and save their fellows ;" "the passion for doing good grows with its exercise." And he rejoices in the "spirit of pure ambition" possessed by his officers and by the seven thousand cadets in training for officership, and possessed also by "tens of thousands" of his soldiers ; "a spirit which is capable of accomplishing mighty things."

On these lines of duty, devotion, and discipline, the body must become increasingly a community apart, "sustained by the ceaseless fighting for souls" which is the law of its being, but filled with "the spirit of compassion and the spirit of love ; the spirit that comes from God ;" the "spirit which before all else has made us what we are, without which we should only have been as 'sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.'"

Such is the programme :—every soul won to become in turn a soldier in the Army, and wisdom and love to guide the work done for the benefit of the multitudes outside its ranks. But these, in spite of all, remain for the most part quite untouched by the Gospel preached. The fear of damnation passes them by, their lives and work go on as though there were no hell ; no overpowering sense of sin is felt. It may be that they think if man be merciful, shall not God be merciful also ? But if this be vain hope and false security ; if the doctrine preached be true for all ; if salvation by acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ be, as they say it is, the one thing needful ; how small the fruit of all the effort !

I do not know what may be the value, even from their point of view, of the conversions recorded among native races in the East, but among those who join the Army in England many, if not most, have come to it from some other

religious body, and may even have been ardent Christians previously, and, all told, the numbers are not very large. Thus the main merit of the Army lies not in conversions but in the large number of people it has bound together by new ties, whose faith it has strengthened, and whom it has set diligently to work for the social and religious welfare of the world.

The doctrine preached and held in the Army is of the simplest evangelical type, delivered with something of a military style; as one might say 'Eyes right! attention!' and exact unquestioning acceptance of a word of command. But the belief is hearty, and the 'Power of the Spirit' is upon them. Moreover, if the doctrine is bald, lacking not only intellectual interest but also spiritual insight and depth of moral thought, much has been done to enrich it with many admirable rules of conduct.

The authorities of the movement make no promises of a material kind [again I quote from "Servants of All"]. There is no guarantee of salary or other emolument—not for a single day—no, nor a single penny Theirs must be a very real life of faith. They are, indeed, themselves a daily answer to the daily prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." Officers, both in their own and other lands, often suffer privations What is the result? it is all good their poverty is one of the great sources of power both with God and man. When it is fully understood that their poverty is, in the vast majority of cases, a self-imposed sacrifice for Christ's sake, that power will be enormously increased. For we must remain poor.

Nevertheless, that the development of the Army and its success in the eyes of the world, should react with harmful effect on some of those whose skilful management has conduced to this success, was, perhaps, inevitable. The Army becomes their business. The spiritual side is lost. But this is not, by any means,

true of the majority ; and the Army possesses in its ranks and amongst its leaders many who, for elevation of purpose and singleness of aim, may be accounted the very salt of the earth.

As a religious body the Army, as a whole, grows in vitality as well as in numbers. It has been commonly said that Mrs. Booth was the spiritual, and General Booth the organizing force, and it may have been so. The loss of Mrs. Booth was certainly very deeply felt. But the spiritual and organizing powers wielded by this remarkable pair live in their children, who are to be found leading the Army and its off-shoots in various parts of the world.

Centralized administration and discipline are cardinal points in the constitution of the Salvation Army, and the method of government adopted has been justified by the results. There have been failures, and struggling or languishing corps are numerous, but he would be bold who would assert that greater local autonomy would have led to greater achievements. In spite of rebuffs here or there, and evident limitations in London, the Salvation Army is a striking monument to the sagacity as well as fervour of its founders.

There have been, however, one or two off-shoots from the Army in London, due to secession, which are to be found flourishing side by side with the parent corps. These Free-Salvationists form, to all intents and purposes, detached Salvation Army corps, the main difference being that their officers are comparatively permanent, while those of the regular corps are continually changed. In itself, such severance seems to be a sign of vitality ; both corps flourish. No essential differences, either in methods of work or measure of success, are noticeable.

We turn now from the inner life of the community

to the social work, which is gradually taking a more prominent place by the side of the efforts made by the Army to convert the world. This social development proceeds almost everywhere, but most of it began in London. It is, in the main, an attempt to raise the character and mitigate the lot of what are called the 'submerged' classes. For this work there is nowhere more scope than in London, and it can best be studied here because the plans adopted have had more time to develop, and thus to show any evil as well as any good that may spring from them.

Everyone is acquainted with the main features of the "Darkest England" scheme, and its methods have already been referred to in a previous volume. Starting in wholesale fashion with night shelters and cheap food depôts, it seeks, in detail, to offer to everyone who is willing to take it, a chance of recovery through industry. Thousands of the homeless and the broken avail themselves of the cheap food or cheap shelter offered. This is the net; the rest that is done is with the view of serving and helping the mass of derelict humanity which the net gathers together. The shelters are crowded nightly. They compete with the lowest of the common lodging-houses and, excepting in them (or in one of the free shelters), nowhere could 'such a collection of humanity be seen;' nowhere else, certainly, in such numbers. The material is almost hopeless, the ordinary employment bureau useless, and what follows is a rough process of selection. Those who ask for further help—a comparatively small number—are passed on to the headquarters of the 'social wing,' where they are either given temporary work, such as scrubbing in one of the shelters, or are admitted at once to the Labour Homes (elevators) or, if suitable, may be sent on at a later stage to the Farm Colony in Essex.

The 'elevators' are intended to train men to

industry ; employing them first in sorting 'waste,' mainly paper, or, if they should be skilled, in carpentering or other trades ; feeding and lodging them meanwhile ; and finally allowing them to earn a little money according to the industry and capacity shown. The Farm Colony serves the same purpose under country conditions, with brick-making as a special industry. These parts of the work of the Social Wing are for men only.

The 'object is to give each man a chance. No studied selection' is made, but there comes to be a natural selection. Those who have been born to better things furnish the most hopeful cases, but the basis of the whole, the real test of fitness, is the willingness to work. This provides the first selection. To submit at all to this condition is some test of desert and opens the door to hope, however faint.

'Permanent' benefit is claimed for a large proportion—even for the majority—of those treated. The word is too strong ; but most do receive some benefit.

There are men who will not work and boast of it ; ~~they~~ know how to scrape along, going where food is given away, and such would rarely seek to enter the elevators. There are others so limp of character, or so stricken in the stress of life, as to have lost all power to stand alone. But the more common case by far is that of those who, sick of the existence they have been leading, will brace themselves for a while to a life of effort. There may be some who can be permanently raised to industry and self respect, but they are few and far between.

What may be claimed is, that under the influence of regular food and regular work, sweetened by kindness, moral and physical health are regained, and the world re-entered on another plane. To achieve this is to succeed ; not to achieve it to fail. In either case, the experience has been an episode not necessarily

conclusive. The admitted failure might even yet under some different conjunction of circumstances, or under different treatment, turn to success, and the apparent success, undermined by the man's inherent weakness, will often lapse again into failure. As to what really happens afterwards there is little or no information. No attempt is made to follow the cases up. No record is kept. Unless the men obtain employment in the Salvation Army they seldom become members of it, and they are not seen nor heard of again; unless indeed they return once more as broken men seeking another chance. If they do well, the connection with the Army is the end of a chapter in their lives which, once closed, men do not care to re-open.

As regards the interesting and valuable experiment of the Farm Colony, it is also said that men broken down with drink and hard living, take up the life for a month or two, just as the rich will undergo a water cure or the discipline of some German baths, and then return with fresh vigour to a more congenial life. I think the parallel is somewhat strained; but the adage concerning the saintliness of the Devil when sick, has some truth in it.

Some Boards of Guardians have sent men from the workhouse to the Farm Colony and express disappointment at the results. Their men failed to stay or profited little. If the results were unfavourable the reason is plain. Unwilling, possibly, as well as unsuitable men so sent would be a less desirable selection than those who come through the Army organization, or on their own personal initiative.*

While employed at the elevators the men live either on the premises, or in a lodging-house—in one case called 'The Lighthouse'—specially reserved for their use. The accommodation is very similar to that given at the

* An account of a visit to this Colony is included among the Illustrations in Vol. VI., Chapter 6.

so-called 'Metropoles,' a superior kind of shelter, competing directly with the ordinary common lodging-house.

A good supply of food is provided. Religious meetings are held five nights a week, and, except at the elevators, when it would be expected, the men attend or not, as they please. It is, however, fully recognised that without conversion 'no permanent good can be expected.' 'A changed life is necessary.'

For the great bulk of the homeless poor who frequent the shelters, the cheap food and cheap lodgings are merely conveniences, which tend to confirm them in the manner of life to which they have fallen. Not only are their lives unaltered, they become more unalterable. It is only some of the younger men, or a few of the old, driven perhaps by extreme want, or by satiety of a kind, who are glad to escape from the life they have been leading and who become the material upon which the elevators have to act. Thus those permanently benefited are a selection of a selection.

The Salvation Army officers do not put it into words, but they appear to acquiesce in the view that the material out of which they thus seek to make good citizens and religious men is almost hopeless; and though 'with God all things are possible,' yet they with difficulty maintain the enthusiasm that looks upon each new face as a possible convert. In fact they do not maintain it.

The cheapening, by charitable intervention, of the price for a night shelter or for food is a very doubtful benefit to the recipients, and causes undeniable mischief to the particular neighbourhood where these things are offered and to London at large, by attracting and facilitating the way of life of the class for which provision is made. It is to be hoped that the practical good sense of the Salvation Army may in time learn how to obviate these evils. The rest of the work is good, and not the

less so if it is often terribly disheartening. Whether in the shelters, or the elevators, or at the Farm, or at the slum posts, or wherever they touch the lowest and the lost, their work is redeemed and glorified by the spirit in which it is undertaken.

The Salvation Army compares favourably with the other missions in respect of mis-directed charity and the cadging hypocisy that too often follows. The Salvationists, being themselves poor, and systematically drawn upon rather than subsidized by the central body, have little or nothing to give; and when cadgers come to the penitent form they are soon detected. Moreover, if the claims from headquarters constitute a drain on their resources, the local corps are in return relieved from much charitable responsibility by the centralized organization of the 'social wing.'

For the support of their social work the Army appeals largely to the outside public, both for money and for countenance. They have had to conquer much hostile prejudice and have learnt how to present their case with diplomatic skill. But they are careful in their statements; and in their appeals, as well as in the administration of the money they receive, they compare favourably with other charitable organizations.*

I have described the Salvation Army in its three-fold development. I have indicated the limitations to which, as a Gospel Mission, it has been subjected in London, and have shown that if in this respect it has failed, it has succeeded in forming a very powerful and remarkable religious community which lives on and in its work. Religious enthusiasm is the inspiring force of this community, and is still poured out in efforts to convert the world to the religious ideas which underlie the whole. But everywhere it turns also to social work,

* The Women's Rescue Work of the Salvation Army is referred to later in connection with other work of the same kind.

and this work comes to have a life of its own. Meanwhile the delusion is maintained that the world, perishing for the lack of belief in the doctrine they preach, is athirst for the Gospel expressed in their formula and typified by their flag, and that what the Army is accomplishing for the salvation of man on these lines is of the first importance. But it is not so. Whatever the value of these doctrines, the belief in them does not spread. No universality can be claimed for them. Their validity rests upon spiritual experiences, subject to various interpretations and not common to all mankind. Nevertheless, the power of these doctrines is great with those who share their acceptance. They serve to bind men together in high aspirations and unselfish devotion, and herein lies their justification. The delusion on this subject is shared by all the Evangelical Missions, but with none has it risen to such a height as with the Salvation Army. On the other hand it must be said, that for earnest faith, strenuous work, and real self-sacrifice for the good of others, the Salvation Army stands first.

§ 2

THE CHURCH ARMY

The work of this great organization concerns London in only a minor degree. It had its origin here and began by emulating some of the methods of the Salvation Army. But except in its name and the use of the title captain which applies to all its officers, and in the wide scope of its work, there is little real similarity. The Church Army does indeed march through the streets with banner and music, and takes its stand at the street corners, but so do many other mission bodies. Its active members, too, don a uniform of dark cloth, braided (a surplice used to be worn for the outdoor as for an indoor service, and for marching, but this has been partially abandoned); but the free and easy style, with its apparent lack of reverence as regards things religious, which we have described in a previous volume, and which goes even beyond the ordinary methods of the Salvation Army, is practically confined to the founder himself. Outside of his own church it has, happily, not 'caught on.'

The difference between the two bodies lies deep. The Salvation Army, as we have seen, is before everything a religious community. The Church Army is not a separate religious body at all; it is merely a working association of members of the Church of England. But it started with the same aims as its prototype; set out to attack the same problems, and having experienced the same difficulties, has followed somewhat similar lines of development.

The first aim (with both) was especially and primarily the idea of the Salvation Army: to bring religion to the poor by new methods of approach. This idea the Church Army took up, but they adopted some plans of their own to carry it out. In London,

besides street preaching in white robes, they have relied on services in darkness with magic lantern effects. In the country, for village work, their characteristic device has been the travelling mission van.* They shared with others the notion that if only the people could be induced to listen, the Gospel would surely win its way, and, like others, have been disappointed. As to London I know ; as to the country I do not know, but feel assured that they have never succeeded beyond the extent to which novelty always will attract attention. They would not admit failure, and are still actively pursuing the attempt, but as with the Salvation Army, the best of their work, and the bulk of it, especially in London, is now social. The raising of the fallen and the care of the outcast has been the task chosen by both. Religion is still the root and mainstay of the work, but industrial methods are those actually employed to achieve their end.

The Church Army system is at every point less wholesale than that of the Salvation Army. Prisons, workhouses and the streets still furnish the material, but each separate attempt is smaller, and those who apply for aid have usually been specially recommended. Even so they are carefully sifted. In the homes there is an age limit of forty for the unskilled or forty-five for those who have a trade, and each man admitted has to give satisfactory assurance of his willingness to work and the earnestness of his determination to lead a 'sober, godly and righteous life.' Otherwise he is rejected at the outset. Those admitted sign an agreement pledging themselves to total abstinence from alcohol, attendance at morning and evening prayer and at a service on Sunday, and undertake to obey all other regulations ; and if they fail in any respect they are dismissed. Work is

* I am told that this, too, was done first by the Salvation Army, but the Church Army has carried it much further.

provided, such as wood chopping, paper sorting, or clerk work (done for the organization itself), and jobbing work outside. Six shillings a week is charged for keep and one shilling allowed for pocket money, and any surplus earnings are held in reserve, subject to forfeiture in case of dismissal for breach of rules. The stay in any home is practically limited to four months, and after the first month, in order that there may be every incentive to find and take up independent employment, the pay is gradually reduced till in the fourth month it leaves no surplus over cost of keep. Each home is in charge of a captain and his wife, who are its 'father and mother,' and the number of inmates is limited to twenty-four. Individual care and influence are what is aimed at.

• Thus fenced in and safe-guarded from abuse, a percentage of success is shown similar to that claimed by the Salvation Army, but probably more solid in character, for though subject to like qualifications, these apply only in a minor degree. The Church Army does not use the word 'success' at all, but confines itself to the phrase, 'obtained a fresh start in life,' which is absolutely accurate, and characteristic of the moderation exhibited in all its public statements. After leaving the Army home satisfactorily, little more is known, for the inmates are not, and probably could not wisely be, followed up.

There are homes for women and for lads; as well as for men, and as regards the women a graduated ladder has been attempted, of which the first rungs are separate institutions for 'receiving' and 'classifying.' The women are then sent to various kinds of home arranged for long, short, and intermediate periods of probation, leading up at length to lodging-houses for those in regular employment; these being still further differentiated according to the nature of the fall from which recovery is sought. All the homes are small,

and at every point, it will be seen, individual care is exercised.

In London there are, for men, seven labour homes and four lodging-houses ; and for women seven agencies of one kind or other. The Army also manages the 'Embankment Home,' supported by contributions obtained by the *Morning Post* newspaper. This is of a different character. It offers employment sufficient to pay for bed and board to any who will accept it. The inmates are collected from those who otherwise would pass the night on the seats of the Victoria Embankment, but as the provisions of the home become better known, men come direct to its doors. It can accommodate thirty-six, and attached to it is a lodging-house which holds fifteen, to which men earning money can be drafted. Many applicants are turned away nightly, and none are admitted two nights in succession. This home may be useful as a feeder for the more deliberate work of the Army, but apart from this its value must rest on the questionable assumption that it does not tend to create the class it seeks to serve. In the end it will perhaps prove that the home is filled nightly without emptying the seats.

The work of the Church Army, however, is not metropolitan but national. The Army is an auxiliary of the Church, and its officers, in effect though not by constitution, are a brotherhood ; the most real that the Anglican Church can show. They are drawn from every class, but drawn much less, than with the Salvation Army, from the human material upon which they work. Their assistance is warmly welcomed by the clergy. The income of the Army amounts to £170,000 a year ; quietly collected, for the most part, from rich members of the Church ; very honestly administered, and spent as the contributors would wish.

§ 3

SISTERHOODS

Time was when the Roman Catholic 'Little Sisters of the Poor' were the only Sisterhood noticeably working in London. Their van went out to collect broken meat for the Sisters themselves and for the poor whom they feed, and may still be seen perambulating the streets in charge of one of the nuns, who, with little or perhaps no knowledge of driving, commits herself and her horse to the guidance of Providence.

Now, there are Sisterhoods without number, the members of which, under whatever title, however trained and organized, and with or without vows, consecrate their lives to the service they enter. All wear distinguishing dresses; some of which are black and nun-like, others smart uniforms of various shades of grey and lavender, with collars, cuffs and bonnet strings in white, veils thrown back, and long flapping cloaks. Everywhere the Sisters may be seen going independently about their work, and they find the dress a great protection. Many are quite young women.

Nurses when on duty wear a uniform of a similar kind, whether they belong to a Sisterhood or not. It suits their work, and most of them are proud to wear it at any time; so that women thus distinctively dressed are now frequent in our streets, and add to the picturesque interest of the scene.

The establishment of Sisterhoods began with the High Church party, and at first was regarded as a dangerous step towards Rome. But Mildmay wisely followed with its deaconesses, and now there are communities and institutions of every shade and shape, in doctrine as well as in dress. The Wesleyans have their 'Sisters of the People,' and the other Nonconformist bodies are following suit. There are also a large and increasing number of Roman Catholic Sisters or nuns belonging to working orders having convents in

London, many of whom help the priests, by visiting the poor, nursing the sick, and teaching the children.

The principal regular Anglican Sisterhoods working in London are the following :

(1) The Sisters of St. John Baptist (known as the Clewer Sisters).

(2) The Sisters of St. Peter's Home ;

(3) The Sisters of the Church ;

(both with their headquarters at Kilburn, and both known by that name).

(4) The Sisters of Bethany.

(5) The Sisters of St. Saviour's Priory (being a branch of the Sisterhood of St. Margaret's, East Grinstead).

(6) The Sisterhood of St. Mary, Wantage.

(7) The Sisterhood of All Saints.

(8) The Sisters of the Ascension.

(9) The Nursing Sisters of St. John the Divine.

Others, more limited in their general scope or in that of their London work, include :

(10) The Sisters of the Holy Cross.

(11) The Sisterhood of St. Mary and St. John (Chiswick).

(12) St. Katharine's Sisterhood (Fulham).

(13) The Community of the Mission Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus (with its headquarters at Malvern Link).

There are also various Deaconesses' Institutions, among which must be mentioned :

(14) The Rochester Diocesan Deaconesses' Institution.

(15) The Women Workers for God in South London (Grey Ladies).

(16) The Women Workers connected with the Church Pastoral Aid Society (sometimes called Blue Ladies).

(17) The All Saints' East London Diocesan Deaconesses' Home.

(18) The St. Andrew's Deaconess Community.

(19) The Mildmay Deaconesses.

With the exception of the Mildmay Deaconesses (many of whom are prepared for the Foreign Mission Field, and who, making nursing a speciality, have, for their work at home, various independent centres), the work undertaken by the deaconess, and to some extent

by the Sisterhoods, is subordinated to that of the parish, in which, although under the general direction of the incumbent, they sometimes come to wield great power.

The general scope and aims of deaconesses' work are indicated in an account given (in the Official Year Book of the Church of England, 1902) of the All Saints' East London Home, founded in 1880 by Bishop Walsham How :

1. To extend the primitive order of deaconesses and to train devout women for the office, who are solemnly set apart by the Bishop in church 'with laying on of hands.'
2. To help the clergy in East and North London who require the assistance of deaconesses in their respective parishes.

All who become deaconesses are required to have an earnest purpose of *life devotion*, and to regard themselves as entirely dedicated to their office.

The home is under the direction of a warden (the Bishop of Stepney), a sub-warden, and a chaplain, and the work, it is said, is being done in many parishes. In addition to the central home in South Hackney, there are branch homes where the deaconesses and other workers live, so as to be near the parishes in which they work under the parish priest. The organization is maintained by contributions from the deaconesses and associates, assisted by subscriptions, by grants from the East London Church fund, and by payments from the clergy.

The note of helpful subordination to the parish clergy is constantly sounded, and thus if a body of deaconesses establish a penitentiary, a hospital, or even a convalescent home, it is felt that they are taking a step which, although not beyond their constitution, does lie beyond their natural province. With a Sisterhood it is otherwise. A Sisterhood is a community, with a distinct corporate sense, and almost inevitably

in these days when a devout life is felt to be incomplete apart from work for God, makes itself responsible for independent undertakings. The refuges, penitentiaries, hospitals, convalescent homes, homes for the dying, orphanages, and other institutions which are undertaken by the various Sisterhoods, are thus felt to be the natural outcome of these associations of ladies, bound together by a long novitiate and by the solemn vows of their order.

Such institutions, however, form but a portion of the work undertaken by the Sisterhoods, and much of this is quite as parochial and as subordinate to that of the local clergy as is that of the deaconesses.*

It is in their charitable work that the Sisterhoods lay themselves most open to criticism. The wise

* Out of thirty institutions managed by the Clewer Sisters about twelve directly concern London, and an enumeration of these will show how great and varied is the work undertaken.

St. Barnabas' Mission (Pimlico), visiting the poor and the sick and carrying on the usual branches of mission work

St. Barnabas' Orphanage and Industrial School (Pimlico), accommodation for seventy orphans of respectable parentage

Two small refuges for fallen women, receiving thirteen and four respectively.

St. John the Baptist Mission Home (Soho), girls trained for service (recently moved to Leytonstone) In connection with this there is a country home at Blackwater (Hants).

The House of Charity (Soho), for temporary relief of the homeless

St. Alban's Mission (Holborn), visiting the poor and the sick, night schools, crèche, Bible-classes, guilds, &c

School of Church Embroidery (Gower Street), a home for young girls who earn their living by church embroidery (pupils received)

All Hallows' Mission (Borough), includes work in Christchurch parish.

Home for Working Girls (Nelson Square, Blackfriars Road), accommodation for seventy girls of very poorest class; home generally full.

St. Giles' Mission House (Poplar), room in mission house for lady workers.

St. Mary's (Westminster), small parish, but so poor that no help can be given by poor residents; the Sisters carry on the usual branches of mission work, visiting, Bible-classes, girls' clubs, Sundayschools, bands of hope, &c.

[The Sisters have undertaken (by request) the visiting of the married quarters of the Brigade of Guards in the various barracks, Chelsea, Wellington, the Tower, Windsor, and Camrham]

St. John the Baptist School (South Hampstead), for girls over twelve, terms sixty guineas a year.

In addition, the Wantage Sisters, the All Saints' Sisters, the Sisters of St. Peter's, the Sisters of the Church and the Sisters of Bethany, have all six or more centres of one kind or other in the metropolis.

administration of relief, at best a very difficult task, becomes hopeless when the principles on which it must rest are undermined by propagandist motives, and as a general rule the Sisters' action appears to be lacking both in religious tolerance and in social insight.

The spirit of the proselytizer has its genesis in the strong religious convictions of the Sisters, which lead them to be keenly alive to the dangers of false doctrine; and horrified at the neglected and heathen lives of the people among whom they work. The temptation to win souls by whatever means then becomes very great; and the unscrupulous spirit which is evinced obtains the more licence from the fact that the Sisters feel themselves to be working not for their own community, but for the Church; not for themselves, but for God.

The way of the charitable reformer is hard, however, and although when the broader issues are taken into account, it is never possible to condone either indiscriminateness or bribery, it is easy to forget, or fail to see, the effects of either. Indeed, given a people neglected and deeply brutalized, the question is not a perfectly simple one as to what is wise and what unwise, even when cadging and hypocrisy obviously follow in the wake of easy going kindliness. There is at least some chance for the exercise of good influence upon those who, while they perhaps have learnt to cant and sham, cannot but have learnt also that they are not uncared for or friendless in the world; a better chance at any rate than when men or women stand brutalized and alone.

There are in London many Sisterhoods of the Roman Catholic Church besides the Little Sisters of the Poor already referred to. Most undertake work of some kind for the Church. The teaching of the girls and infants in the Catholic elementary schools is managed in this way, and they also conduct many excellent

schools for girls of the middle class to which even non-Catholic parents send their children. Others visit the poor and nurse the sick. The Little Sisters of the Assumption, for instance, "devote themselves exclusively and gratuitously to nursing the sick poor in their own homes, both day and night. They take charge of the home and of the children and make themselves practically the servants of the poor and of their families." Of the helpfulness to them of these devoted Sisterhoods, we have heard from every priest we have seen.

The Baptists, the Primitive Methodists, and the United Methodist Free Church, have each their Sisters working among the people at their mission centres, but of the Nonconformists, the Wesleyan organization of Sisters of the People is the most important. It is now widespread, some of the Sisters being employed at each of their missions. There is at present no centralized body, nor systematic training, but that may probably come. The great West London mission employs no less than twenty-five Sisters, of whom all but three live together. Mrs. Hugh Price Hughes is their leader. The following passages, from a 'ten years' retrospect' by this lady, show what the idea was and how it has developed under her guidance :—

Long before the mission was started I had felt very deeply that there was a great sphere of work in our own and other churches for devout and educated women. Individual women in our churches have always been active in every good work, but a definitely organized community can do certain kinds of work which are impossible to individual workers, especially in great centres of population devout women of humble position in life were often employed as Bible-women we needed greatly the co-operation of the educated, cultured woman. I was anxious for a Sisterhood that could work on lines free enough to allow

of individual initiative, development and continual adaptation With the inauguration of the mission came the opportunity. The first house was obtained in November, 1887, and our first three Sisters came at once into residence. During the year the number gradually increased until the house was full. In 1891, the growth of our organization obliged us to remove to the large and commodious house which we now inhabit.

. the backbone of our work was district visitation. Every Probationer came into touch with the poor. Every development of our work has arisen out of the discovery of special needs through actual contact with the people The terrible need for thorough trained nursing in the homes of the poor soon made itself felt, and during 1887 our first nursing sister began her work. About Christmas in the second year of the mission we opened our crèche For some weeks no children at all were brought suddenly the tide turned and babies came flocking in Once a baby was left on our hands, and more than once also we were summoned to appear at a coroner's inquest to answer charges brought against us to extort blackmail. We learned wisdom by our sorrows, and the crèche grew and flourished. Very early in our history, a mothers' meeting, a girls' club, and a children's playhour were started, and have been multiplied in every part of the mission.

In the second year we began to organize Relief work. We soon found the utter futility and mischief of every attempt to relieve distress by small doles of money which gave no permanent benefit. A weekly relief committee was formed. We found the great advantage of becoming members of the various C. O. S. committees in our district. We have Sisters sitting (also) on the committees of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, Country Holiday Fund, Workhouse Girls' Aid Association, and on the Board of Guardians. Over and over again a Sister has been able to render effectual aid by bringing sufferers into communication with some agency. The poor are so ignorant and helpless that they often fail to avail themselves even of help that already exists unless guided. An early outcome of the

relief work was the opening of a registry office for the poorer class of servants and other women in want of work. Girls also continually came to us when in trouble or peril. That was the beginning of our organized Rescue work.

One of the Sisters had it greatly laid upon her heart to do something for the aged inmates of the workhouse whose only pleasure when let out was to beg coppers and then get drunk. She approached the master of the workhouse, and with his co-operation invited all the old people to tea. From that day until now those teas have been held on the afternoon of every holiday in connection with the three great workhouses in our district. The effect of this simple act of kindness on these poor old people has been incalculable. Workhouse visitation followed as a natural result.

. early in the sixth year we opened our Rescue Home at Walthamstow. For nearly five years Winchester House has been a home indeed to many an unhappy girl. As time went on, however, we found the home too far off. Meantime, our work in Piccadilly had developed. A Sister spent two or three nights a week there, and it became necessary to have close at hand a home where a girl could be received at once. Winchester House has been given up, and we have opened a home within walking distance where our two Rescue Sisters live. We are in touch with many excellent homes and we can pass a girl on to the home most suitable We had already found absolute need for classification many cases are far better dealt with in other ways.

From the first, the directly spiritual work has absorbed our most earnest thought and attention. As the devotional classes grew in size they required most careful organization, and the work of the Inquiry room also had to be followed up with the utmost thoroughness. [I quote every word of this curiously perfunctory statement.]

Space fails [continues the report] to speak of the work that gradually grew up in the boys' and girls' clubs,

temperance organizations, and the various guilds and classes for younger children. A few years ago the Guild of the Brave Poor Things was inaugurated. The idea was a beautiful one, and has been carried out by the Sister who started it, in many other towns in the country. It is a guild of those who learn to accept bravely the heavy cross of physical infirmity. Their motto [taken, as was the idea, from Mrs. Ewing's "Story of a Short Life"] is "*Lætus sorte meâ*" ("Happy in my lot"). Patience, courage, cheerfulness, mutual love and help are the lessons taught, and into these sad and maimed lives has come a new inspiration and a sense of the dignity of suffering.

The Holiday Home at Bisley has become a centre of spiritual life for many of the smaller villages round about. Two Sisters are weekly visitors at St. Luke's House, and it is their solemn duty to comfort the dying and lead them to trust in that Saviour who is our refuge and strength in life and in death.

The latest experiment of all has been made by two Sisters who have taken a flat of five rooms in work-people's dwellings, and manage entirely themselves. The boys and girls among whom they work, and their poor neighbours generally, come in and out freely.

I have touched but lightly on the principal branches developed during our eleven years of work there yet remains a mass of untabulated work which cannot be labelled but which comes to us from all sorts of unexpected quarters. God only knows the far-reaching results of much that has been done in this way, but we rejoice to think that it is "bread cast upon the waters" which will be found after many days.

The story is well told, and with very slight variants would be the story of the work of almost any other Sisterhood that has taken root and grown.

I will add an extract from the 1902 report of the same mission—four years later. It refers to the sudden and unexpected death of one of the Sisters—the first taken from them by death.

From the very commencement of her mission life she

struck out a very decided line of her own, which took the form of very patient and careful study of the various forms of distress which came pouring in upon us from all sides, and the best and wisest means of relief. In her department she became an expert, and few people had such a wide practical knowledge of the various charitable societies and institutions of London, or such shrewd common sense and wisdom in dealing with those who apply to us (and they do apply by hundreds) for help and advice in every form of distress and need which is possible to humanity. Since her death nothing has been more pathetic than the letters and testimonies which have come to us on all sides. In her short life she accomplished a work which has set its mark upon the West London mission. She has left behind her a memory that will never fade from the hearts and minds of those who knew her, and an influence that will live in many, many lives.

This too, high eulogium as it is, might be said of many other individual Sisters besides Sister Edith of the West London Mission; and one and all are only too ready to sacrifice their lives to the work.

I will conclude by quoting wise words on this subject from the wife of one of the South London clergy:

Is it worth while to be a woman worker in a poor parish? Are there any encouragements in such a work?

Indeed there are! Given a whole-hearted love and loyalty, there is a glorious reward and a happiness which the work itself brings. Come and try for yourselves if God opens the way! Are you inexperienced? Come and learn. Experiences ripen fast in such places. Come with a high ideal. *Expect difficulties* and you will not be discouraged.

Are the lady-workers appreciated in our poor parishes? Come with me ask the people themselves; as you follow the well-known uniforms from house to house—"Our ladies" they proudly call them. Ask that broken-hearted mother who it was that patiently sat in her child's sick room, speaking words of comfort and breathing a prayer as life ebbed away. Ask that hard-working, anxious father with the terrible burden of a

drunken wife to bear, who it was that spared no pains to rescue his girl. Ask the children ask the rough lasses ask the elder girls;—ask those who are striving by God's grace to give up sin and to lead better lives. Ask the sick if they would not miss the skilled attention, the cheery word, the womanly sympathy. Ask the vicar's wife what difference the ladies make to her life. Ask the vicar and he will tell you that their work is more than ever valued.

The difficulties are many; and there are words of warning as to those which come from within, as well as those from without. The former are the more subtle:—

We who are in the thick of the fight realize that the Evil One has not abandoned his old methods of trying to spoil God's work by the hand of woman. There is no being upon earth that needs to keep closer to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ than the woman worker, be she clergyman's wife, or worker in any other capacity. We women have an enormous power of influence. We feel how the prominence which our work obliges us to take may lead us to be domineering and self-opinionated. We know how the close contact and familiarity with holy things, necessary to our work, may lead us to speak more lightly and less reverently about sacred things—to be superficial. We realize how our very zeal in God's service may take us off our guard, and weariness of body bring peevishness and fretfulness of mind. In our anxiety to use the days, as *we* think, to the best advantage, we try to crowd in more than health and strength will allow. The work is so great and the labourers are so few, that in our feverish attempts to accomplish much, we are apt to forget that *God can do all!* and that at times it is our duty to leave off work and wait upon Him. "Be still, and know that I am God."

§ 4

RESCUE WORK

Work among fallen women is undertaken by many of the religious bodies. Joint action is aimed at. Associations are formed, and the work of rescue is often combined with that of the vigilance committees formed in the localities most affected by the evil with which all alike are seeking to deal. In the effort to reach and save these women, most of the Sisterhoods take part; and to this work the Salvation Army devotes special attention, as does the Church Army. I shall append some extracts which will show the spirit in which this work is taken up.

Of the magnitude of this evil in London I will say nothing now. It is only too apparent. Nor shall I touch here on the allied questions of repression and regulation, or the control of the streets or other public places, which are dealt with in my final volume, but shall confine my remarks to the possibilities of rescue.

The success of rescue work is practically confined to the newly fallen. Its emissaries are always on the look-out for fresh faces, and amongst them they find always some who can be saved by prompt kindness, and rehabilitated in some way—most often, perhaps, by their mothers' love. The rescue agency always tries to reopen relations with the girl's old home, a step which without some outside interference would probably seldom be taken. When this is impossible, or unsuccessful, the agency tries to make life in the rescue home lead to reputable employment, and in this often succeeds. Relations with the rescue home are not relinquished. Affectionate interest completes what watchfulness and care begin. The work is very costly in money, and demands devoted work and unwearied patience, but it is all repaid; and though extremely limited in scope, results are obtained of untold value.

Not only are the regularly established cases practically irreclaimable, but it is also very difficult to touch any whose action, whatever the motive, has been deliberate, or such as have slid into the life down the easy incline which often ends the path entered on by becoming some man's mistress. Thus, as with men in industrial homes, those who can be saved are a selection out of many. The proportion of possible success, in the sense of enabling the girls to make a 'fresh start,' is indeed much smaller than in the case of men, but the ruin escaped is greater, and the salvation, if attained, more complete.

Much stress is laid upon the religious side of this work, and naturally, for the women who engage in it are themselves, for the most part, devoutly religious. Their teaching and example must have some effect, but the chance of saving a girl from the life of a prostitute does not, as a rule, depend upon her religious susceptibilities, but rather on the need of her heart for, and its response to, pure human affection; and below that on the hold that the claims of order, decency, and respectability of life have on her nature. By most of the agencies, however, such religious feelings as the girls have are stimulated to the utmost—overstimulated, I should say—by a treatment leading, it may be feared, to "a perilous heightening of the sentient soul," and likely to result in failure, from the impossibility of maintaining what is, after all, an unnatural level.

While looking out for new cases, those engaged in the work come in contact with, and make the acquaintance of, many others. The door is perhaps kept open for even the most hardened, but however desirous such women are to reform, it would be fatal to mix the old with the new cases. For their treatment special institutions are needed of a different character; for them it may very probably be true that 'nothing but the Gospel' will serve—that only by the power of

Faith can they be won. Not very many are prepared to make the trial; or able, unless the spirit be strengthened and the struggle glorified by religion, to stand the dreary life such institutions offer. The road is very hard to tread. The deprivation of alcohol, alone, is a severe penance to those who have been habituated to its excessive use.

But though it may be next to impossible to lift these women out of the life they are leading, not a little can be done by kindly intercourse, to humanize them in it. This is a much lighter task, and relieves the terrible strain of actual rescue work. The more professional the rescuer becomes, the more she turns in this direction.

What are called 'maternity cases' form another side of this work, and are also best treated separately. Many girls have had a baby before taking to prostitution for a livelihood, and some may have one after. In the latter case it comes soon, and its birth affords a chance for rescue. In the other cases the birth of the child is both the time of danger and the opportunity for meeting it. A girl who has 'got into trouble,' and with no one responsible to father her child, is turned out of or runs away from her home, which will sometimes happen, almost inevitably loses her employment also, and must go into some charitable institution or the workhouse to be confined. If she is then abandoned to her own resources, she must either put her child out to nurse in order to resume her work, or go upon the streets. The money she can earn by industry will probably not suffice to support both the child and herself, and unless looked after (or unless the baby dies), she probably becomes a prostitute. It is at this point that maternity cases and ordinary rescue work come together, and may be combined, being equally needed and equally rewarded by success; and the world, in spite of a bad name, is

often gentle, so that for every case of this nature that leads to prostitution there will be several that do not.

I suppose it is necessary in regard to regular maternity cases to consider the danger of making the lot of the mother of an illegitimate child too easy. Girls might possibly regard less seriously the birth of a child for which the father cannot be made responsible if the consequences were lightened too much by charitable solicitude; but whether or no any such calculation be needed in their case, it is unnecessary in regard to ordinary rescue work, for it is hardly likely that any girl would be influenced towards taking up the life of a prostitute because there is a road out of it through the rescue home. Still it may be questioned how far charity is right in especially lavishing itself in this direction.

Some extracts from reports are subjoined :

(1) *Charing Cross Vigilance and Rescue Committee.*

(a) The Ladies' Committee have to report that since the opening of the Shelter 709 cases in all have been received, and have been dealt with as follows:—

314 have been placed in homes.

108 were found situations.

77 were restored to their friends.

53 were sent to hospitals.

44 were assisted in various ways.

109 proved to be unsatisfactory, or left of their own accord.

4 remained in the Home at the close of the year.

709 Total.

Of this number, 61 new cases have been received into residence during the past year. Many have been assisted in various ways at the cost of much thought and trouble, who did not need to be admitted. Many former inmates have also been received for a few days for various reasons.

No one who is not actively engaged in this work can

have the least idea of the amount of labour, and patience, and discouragement involved in it.

The popular idea is, that these women are eager to leave a life of sin, and are only prevented because of the difficulties in their way, or because no hand is stretched out to help them.

The plain and simple truth is, that for the most part, they have no desire at all to be rescued. Perhaps the most painful part of the whole work lies in the fact that so many of these women do not, and will not, regard prostitution as a sin. As one sits down and enters into general conversation with these girls, nicely and neatly dressed, well-behaved, and sometimes even with serious thoughts as to the results of the life they lead, it seems incredible that they can be content to go on persistently in the same course. But they have become so accustomed to idleness, and excitement, and luxury, that it is impossible for them to face the prospect of hard, and tiresome, and monotonous labour. "I am taken out to dinner and to some place of amusement every night; why should I give it up? and what else can I do?" It is obvious that a great deal of work has to be done before such arguments can be overcome. Too often it is only when trouble, or sickness, or poverty is felt that the consequences of such a course of life are realized, and the mind is turned towards an amendment of living. Until in some way the conscience is aroused, and the desire for reform awakened, we can do little but wait: and let it be known that we are waiting and willing to help them in every way in our power.

One feature of the work which deserves notice, is the variety of avenues through which these girls come to us. Of course, we have had our own worker who has visited at night in those streets in which they parade, and many have accepted the direct personal invitation given by this means. Some apply of their own accord; some are brought in by older companions; many are sent by the police; some by the Travellers' Aid Society; some by Relieving Officers, and some by private individuals. This fact tends to show that our Shelter is now pretty widely known amongst all those who may be expected to take an interest in its work, as well as to those who may desire its assistance.

Another point to be remembered is, that each case has its own history and its own individuality. No one rule can be applied to all alike. Moral disease cannot be cured any more than physical disease, by any one method. We are greatly indebted to the skill and energy of the indefatigable Matron for discovering the best way of dealing with each case.

The letters received from former inmates, which, of course, cannot be made public, give abundant evidence of the good results of this work. We cannot, indeed, accomplish all that we wish. There are many disappointments and discouragements, much of which we are a little too ready to call failure. But there is much, too, to cheer and to encourage; and it would be an act of cowardice to give up the work because it is difficult or distasteful.

For those who recognise the love of the Blessed Saviour for the lost and most of all for those who "have no will to come to Him that they may have life;" for those who desire to follow His example, and to do what He would have done, the call is peremptory and clear. Let us thankfully acknowledge that the results can only come from Him, and let us pray that His Holy Spirit may incline the hearts of the wandering to return to Him.—*From Report for 1899*, pp. 7-9. •

(b) It must not be supposed that all difficulties have been overcome when a woman has been persuaded to take advantage of the Shelter. All cases cannot be treated according to a uniform system, and for this the utmost forbearance and patience are needed. Individual character must be carefully studied; the truth must by some means be elicited; the restless spirit produced by a life of excitement is sure to break out again and must be restrained, and when all this and more has been carefully considered, then it must be determined in what way each particular case is to be disposed of, so far as our Home is concerned. Is it a case for a longer stay in a Home for Penitents? And if so, which of the Homes will be best adapted to deal with it? or is hospital treatment needed? or can the young woman be safely trusted in a situation, or be returned to friends? And even then, when the case is so far clear, there remains the work

which is often the most difficult of all, to persuade the girl to place herself so far in the hands of the committee, as to be willing to adopt the course which has been thought best for her.

Nor is our responsibility at an end when at last our penitent has been removed from our shelter to some more permanent Home. She has to be written to and visited and made to understand that there are those who really care, who are interested in her well-doing, and are ready, for Christ's sake, to do all that can be done to help her.—*Report*, 1897, pp. 7-8.

(c) We are continually asked whether the work is a hopeful one, whether there is sufficient evidence of success, to make it worth while to carry it on? This is a question by no means easy to answer. No doubt, there are continual disappointments and many failures. No doubt, the work is the most trying and irksome within the whole range of Christian philanthropy. But to admit that it is hopeless, or to allow that it might well be abandoned on the ground of its difficulty, is altogether impossible to those who recognise the power of religion, and depend upon the strength of the sovereign grace of God. In this work there is no place for despair, and those who carry on the work are upheld by the conviction that no case can be hopeless.

It is this conviction which makes success possible. The patience which perseveres in spite of apparent failure, which tries again and again, even when there seems no response, is the best qualification for one who is engaged in this work.—*Report*, 1893, pp. 4-5.

(2) *St. Catherine's Home (from first Report).*

It was impossible to do the work satisfactorily without a Home The Home is open all night, and none are ever turned away, the only condition being that they shall give up their bad lives; this many of them are only too thankful to do. It is a most welcome sound when the bell rings in the night, and some poor girl—miserable, cold, and forsaken—steps into the warmth and brightness of the Home.

There is accommodation for twelve girls, and there is rarely a vacancy. During the year eighty have been

received, the ages varying from fourteen upwards; some have stayed eleven months, others nine and eight months; eleven are still in the Home, while others have been passed on to other homes and penitentiaries, and eighteen have been sent direct to refuges and homes, being, for various reasons, unfit for admission into St. Catherine's.

[This home is, in effect, a depôt where the girls are received temporarily, and from which they are passed on in one direction or another.—C. B.]

The conduct of the girls in the Home is, as a rule, wonderfully good; occasionally an unruly spirit comes in, but she is quickly disposed of; they are obedient and easily influenced, and very industrious and happy. Idleness is not known in St. Catherine's; all kinds of work are done for three large shops, besides private orders from ladies for very fine work; the work is well and faithfully done, and the result is that more work comes to the Home than can be done by twelve girls; but, alas, the payments are very small in proportion

[Several treats are here mentioned as having been given.]

Our thanks are due to the ladies who so kindly take charge on different afternoons and read to the girls at their work

Father Page, the Superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cowley, is the visitor of the Home. The girls attend the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Munster Square

But the whole success of the work is emphatically due to Miss * * * * *, the lady in charge Her untiring energy, as well as her special talent for winning and influencing girls of this class, have made the Home what it is.

[The girls treated in the Home have been almost all either new to the life from which it offered an escape, or had not yet taken it up. "Twelve rescued from bad houses, eight found wandering in the streets, homeless and friendless seven found in common lodging-houses and hanging about the squares and streets in the greatest danger, have been restored to their friends"]

(3) *The Church Mission to the Fallen* has been founded

for the purpose of carrying on direct missionary work among the fallen and unchaste, and combatting vice in its own strongholds. It has long been felt that whilst the Church had, to some extent, provided for the care of those who desire to leave a life of sin, she has been very remiss in following her Master's example of endeavouring to seek and save that which was lost.

The Church Mission to the Fallen will endeavour to carry out its work—

(a) By the employment of women as missionaries to seek out fallen women in their own homes, in the hospitals, in workhouses, and in public streets.

(b) By holding mission services in churches and schools.

(c) By united intercession.

(d) By efforts of a preventive nature.

The Church Mission to the Fallen does not propose to establish refuges or penitentiaries, but to confine itself to direct missionary work. It is clear, however, that as the work of the mission increases, more Homes will be needed. May God stir up the hearts of those who have time and money to spare, to give both themselves and their goods for the active work of the mission, and to provide shelter for those who may be gathered in.—*18th Annual Report, 1898.*

(4) *Rescue Homes of the Salvation Army.*

. And if this is the way the spirit of friendship operates in the Shelters, how much more is it a potent force in the Homes for women who have lost their character, in the Institutions for ex-Criminals and the "Houses for Inebriates"? The best answer to the question would perhaps be, "*Come and see.*"

For the *spirit* which prevails in these places, especially in the first named, is truly the spirit of the Friend of publicans and sinners. It breaks down the most self-willed and turbulent souls. Women who seem to be at times possessed of devils, so violent are they, so blasphemous, so unspeakably filthy, are brought down and softened. Hope is reawakened in them; a new world of possible happiness appears—very far off, in very dim outline at first, but appears all the same, and gradually grows more near and more real. Convinced of the true concern for their welfare, which is felt by their

officers, they gradually open to them their true history, and by-and-by confess their sin, and cry to God for His mercy. The victories so won are worthy to be placed side by side with the greatest triumphs of Jesus Christ in the hearts and lives of the vilest and blackest savages. It is the Love of God revealed in the love of holy men and women which wins the battle.—*From "Friends of the Poor" (1901), p. 33.*

§ 5

WORK IN PRISONS AND AMONG DISCHARGED PRISONERS

The work of the St. Giles's Christian Mission among prisoners mentioned in an earlier volume is shared by the Salvation Army, the Church Army, and others.

This work has become the principal branch of the St. Giles's Christian Mission, which 'has homes for discharged prisoners and for friendless juvenile offenders, and assists the wives and children of prisoners.' Its officers are ever on the watch at the prison gates to interpose between the discharged man and the renewal of a life of crime, and in this have had the hearty co-operation of the prison officials. This mission was first in the field, its work amongst discharged prisoners dating from 1877 ; but the other agencies do similar work in a similar way, and all the more important have obtained definite official recognition in the shape of permission for their officers to visit in the prisons, so as, if possible, to pave the way for further action on discharge. The general scope of the work can best be shown by extracts from the reports :—

(1) *Prison Gate Work (St. Giles' Christian Mission).*

Our method of working at the prison gates is, we think, by now well known. At that critical moment when liberty is regained after a period of strict restraint, when former companions are at hand with all their insidious and

powerful temptations, and when the public-house invites to fresh debauchery, we also are at hand, and strive to counteract the evil influences, by providing a substantial free breakfast for all those who will accept our invitation, and by kindly earnest counsel from God's Word. Some one has called this "prison-gate fishing." So it is, and on a large scale, for we net about twenty thousand ex-prisoners annually, and bring them, immediately after their liberation, under the sound of the Gospel—the Gospel of pardon for the vilest and hope for the most dejected.

As we warn our hearers and plead with them, the attentive silence is eloquent. The subdued "click" of the cups against the saucers, and the voice of the speaker, are the only sounds heard. May the pitiful, compassionate Lord who "desires not the death of a sinner but rather that he should turn and live," very richly bless His Word to our guests.—*From "The Dawn of Hope,"* 1899, p. 19.

(2) *Prison Gate Work (Salvation Army).*

After a long sentence—say of two years at hard labour—the poor wretch comes out broken in mind and in body. He is cowed; he has no longer any will, any resource, or any courage; he is like a cur whipped and kicked into a thing that follows at heel when it is bidden. Let me again recall the appearance of these unhappy creatures as I have seen them in the Refuge of the Salvation Army on the morning of their deliverance. They sit spiritless, obedient, not daring to speak to one another, or to their new friends, waiting for some fresh order. It is pitiful to look at this semblance of manhood, this degraded humanity When the sentence is over, the warders escort the creature who was a man before they got him, to the gates of the prison; they throw the doors open wide, and they say, not unkindly, these men of rule and regulation, "Go, and sin no more." What is the wretched man to do? He needs must sin again. No one will employ him. At the doors of this terrible place the officers of the Salvation Army stand in readiness to receive their guests with warm hand grasps and friendly words, as they leave the hell behind them. They carry them off to their Refuge and they set them down to breakfast with words of friendly cheer.—*From Sir Walter Besant's Account in the "Century Magazine."*

(3) *The Church Army's Prison Work.*

For years we have received men and women direct from prison into our Homes, not only in the metropolis, but in all parts of the country, and amongst the various types of cases with which we deal there is none so hopeful, or so encouraging, as the "prison case." This good work of the Society has been officially recognised by the appointment, by the Home Office, of the Church Army as a Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society for the convict prisons, and the request has been made by the Chairman of the Prison Commissioners that the Church Army should send a thoroughly experienced and capable representative to each convict prison every six weeks, and interview each prisoner who will be released during the subsequent two months. In this way we get into direct touch with the prisoners before their release, and are enabled to more effectively help them when they come out.

In Charles Reade's great story "It's Never too Late to Mend," when Robinson, in the dark cell, is on the verge of suicide, he is saved by the voice which calls through the darkness, "Brother."

That, briefly, is the spirit in which our missionaries work. They take with them the simple Gospel; they deliver their message in the plainest and most direct manner; they try to make the prisoners feel that they are men and women—brothers and sisters—and to get them to make a beginning in building up self-respect.

The work has been richly owned of God.—*From "England's Prisons,"* p. 6.

(4) *The London Diocesan Police Court Mission* has its missionaries in attendance at each Metropolitan Police Court, and attributes the success of the work to having won the sympathy of the entire magisterial bench.

What we do for Men.

When a man comes into the police court dock for the first time, he is like a ship at sea without a rudder. There are things he could tell the magistrate that would assist his case if he only knew how. This is where our missionaries are able to do good work for prisoner and magistrate. Having seen the prisoner before he goes into the dock, the missionary knows his history and story, and

is able to inform the magistrate upon points that otherwise would not be known.

Very often when a man is charged he would lose his employment but for the missionary, who sees his employer, and pleads the cause of the offender, that he may not be dismissed. During 1896 no less than one hundred and seventeen persons were reinstated by their employers through the intercession of the missionaries.

When a man is charged, after the disposal of his case, he is visited regularly at his home by the missionary. Nine thousand visits of this kind were made during 1896; a large percentage being to men.

To find employment for persons charged is not easy. Work was found during the year by the missionaries for two hundred and twenty-eight men, and six hundred and eighty-three were assisted with stock, &c., to earn a livelihood.

Besides all these, clothing, boots, furniture, and rent have been given to thousands, and many have been taken to homes.

What we do for Women and Girls.

There are two classes of females who are the special care of the mission, viz.: Servant girls who have come from the country to London; and wives and mothers, whose husbands or sons have incriminated themselves, leaving them in sorrow and in difficulty to struggle on as best as they may while the bread-winners are in prison. Year by year hundreds of young and innocent girls are exposed to the many temptations of this huge city. These the mission tries to befriend and restore to their homes and friends; while wives and mothers are assisted to keep their homes and families together.—*From "Darkness and Dawn,"* 1896.

(5) We will conclude this section by reproducing verbatim from our notes the following account of the work and experiences of a missionary engaged in police court work :—

Mr. A. is in the employ of the Church of England Temperance Society, and has been for some years missionary at one of the police courts. He has an erect and

active bearing, and impresses as being an alert, practical man. His knowledge of human nature is "extensive and peculiar;" he is intimate with many of its strangest specimens; he is full of his work, talks of it very readily, and has an apparently inexhaustible budget of incidents to relate in connection with it.

He is, he says, allowed greater freedom than any other class of missionary, has in fact a practically free hand, and money apparently is not stinted where he feels it necessary to use it. He has exceptional opportunities of dealing with the classes who frequent police courts. He attends the police court every day and hears the cases. In the morning people come to the magistrate to ask for advice, in the afternoon those who come are brought there. He makes such inquiries as he deems requisite; he may talk with the prisoners in the cells, and is quickly able to decide which cases are sufficiently hopeful to be taken up.

Once he has decided to deal with a case, no pains are spared to go through with it. In some instances a little temporary help is all that is required; in others nothing but the most thorough assistance and treatment will suffice. Long journeys may be involved and much labour and expense, but the case is watched and tended with remarkable patience and resource. Not merely the person charged, but more often the unfortunate wife and children are cared for.

He has had a good deal to do with street women, all of whom, he says, find their way to the police court sooner or later; also with cases of attempted suicide, many of which are never heard of in the newspapers, which only give the most sensational examples. He has been enabled to give a fresh start to many who had broken down in this way. Those who have fallen from a respectable position he often takes to his own house; he has had some of the most notorious characters in London staying with him, yet he has never missed anything, nor has his wife been insulted in any way. He finds that those who have come down through folly or evil courses are affected for good by the confidence shown in them, and by their restoration to decent and comfortable surroundings. For a similar reason he never gives second-hand clothes to those who have been in good circumstances, but obtains new

ones, as he finds that to be well dressed has a great influence in restoring their self-respect, and inducing them to live up to a better standard, mentioning an instance in which the gift of a new suit of clothes and a clean shirt was the means of giving a man a fresh start in life.

Mr. A. told several stories in illustration of his work :— As showing its pathetic side, he quoted the case of a poor widow whom he first met at the police court, where she was charged with attempted suicide. She had been placed in a cell and was crying bitterly because the key had been turned upon her. He found that she had been living four years in one room supporting her four little children by making match boxes, working Sunday and weekday, and making seven gross a day at 2½d a gross. Her husband before his death had made her promise not to let the children go to the workhouse, so she worked on, making no appeal for help, and becoming simply a machine. She said she had not once been visited by any religious agency, nor did these agencies seem to know anything of her. The magistrate discharged her, and Mr. A. sent the children into the country and took her and two others with him to a quiet seaside village in Sussex when he went for his own holiday. He sat her down in a chair on the sands, and it was a pitiful sight to see her; she did not know what to do with her hands, but kept working and twiddling them about as if making match boxes. Subsequently he got some help from the Guardians, paid her rent for four years (extracting as a condition that she should not work more than ten hours a day and not at all on Sundays), until her eldest boy obtained a situation at a printer's, getting seven shillings a week wages. Then he told her that in the improved circumstances, she must rely on herself.

Another story was that of a well-educated woman and her little nephew, whom he found living over a mews. This woman had been letting lodgings, and had unwittingly signed a bill of sale when she obtained some good furniture on credit. One day some men came and took her furniture and sold it. An action was brought against the man, and £200 damages obtained, but the defendant became bankrupt the next day; she was literally starving whilst waiting and hoping for something

out of the estate. He put her into a house, and now she has a large lodging house at a popular seaside resort, and in that way supports herself.

Amongst other duties Mr. A. undertakes is that of taking care of men's wages. At the present time he is doing this in four cases and seeing the wages properly applied, because the men cannot for some reason be trusted with money themselves. One of these is an able and very intelligent man who is unable to take a thimbleful of spirits without being transformed into a demon, but who yet has a great craving for drink. He has been several times in trouble for drunken assaults. Mr. A. has induced the man to let him take his salary, and this he pays over to the wife twice a week and for immediate use.

Asked if he had experienced failures, Mr. A. admitted there had been many, and immediately commenced a remarkable story apropos thereof. It was of a little man, a bookbinder who, although but forty-two years old when Mr. A. met him, had served twenty-five years' imprisonment. Burglary had an extraordinary fascination for this man; it was described as equal to the passion for drink and gambling rolled into one; yet he was a very clever workman and a man of ability, fond of reading and study. In this case Mr. A. took no end of trouble, stayed with the man and read with him, and with the greatest difficulty obtained him a capital private connection (including work from the judges who had convicted him) and a very comfortable home. The man was most grateful, and repaid all the money spent on him for furniture, &c. His wife, however, was the means of his downfall again. Whilst he had been in prison she went on to the streets, and got into the habit of drinking. Prostitution she readily gave up, but not so the other vice. Saved at first by the novelty of her new surroundings, she nevertheless after a time took to drinking again, and became an awful drunkard, leading the man a miserable life. He stood it quietly for some time, "it was a great wonder he did not kill her," said the missionary, but he never touched her, nor would he leave her or have her put into an institution. But one day she struck him, and he then went off. The same night, although having £6 in his pockets, and half-a-

dozen pairs of boots at home, with plenty of good work to do, he broke into a boot factory, was chased for hours by the police, and ultimately captured, and is now serving six years' penal servitude. He writes the missionary pitiful letters from gaol. Within a week the woman had sold up every stick of the home.

Mr. A.'s work seems to be more philanthropic than religious. After he had helped in every way the man whose case is just quoted, the man asked him if he were expected to be religious now. "Why do you ask?" said the missionary. "Because," was the reply, "I tell you at once that I believe in neither God nor devil." "Mr. A. does not seem to have tried greatly to influence the man religiously. Indeed, neither in this nor any other case did he speak of spiritual influences.

CHAPTER IX

SETTLEMENTS AND POLYTECHNICS

§ 1

SETTLEMENTS

SETTLEMENTS are the children of the last two decades, and most of the polytechnics are of even later growth. Of the former, there are now about a dozen in London, and four of these occupy special buildings equipped with lecture-halls, class-rooms, club-rooms and gymnasias, as well as the rooms for the residents which are their distinctive feature. The others are of all sizes and degrees of completeness; the smallest being in effect merely missions which combine something of the Settlement idea. 'We hope gradually to form a Settlement' is a very common formula with the religious bodies when these are working in poor neighbourhoods, and always implies that the help is desired of laymen who will come into residence, and for whom special accommodation, perhaps rooms over the club, is generally available. As regards women, it is quite common to find the chief parish workers from outside, even though unconnected with any particular community or order, occupying special quarters in the district.

If standing alone, a Settlement may perhaps be described as a 'residential club with a purpose'—the purpose being connected with the social, moral, or religious improvement of the neighbourhood in which

the club is established. Local needs and other differences in opportunity, as well as in motive and *personnel*, have been followed by differences in the work undertaken, but save that some Settlements are corporately responsible for religious work and others are not, in their main characteristics they are alike. The practical aims of all may be grouped under the headings of Education, Recreation, Charitable Effort and Local Government. Of these four sides to the work one or other may come into greater prominence, or the particular developments may vary : here lectures and classes, and there clubs ; in one case, exhibitions ; in another, concerts or entertainments ; in this one the organization of charity, and in that the active participation in the government of the district ; but in some shape these four are always present. There is, moreover, a constant community of aim found in the underlying idea of neighbourliness—the ‘making of friendships’ which is sometimes spoken of as the fundamental idea of all Settlements alike. And finally, the religious motive, whether in the foreground or the background, is always present.

Thus the complexity, and yet uniformity, of aim which we have found to be characteristic of so much religious work is no less conspicuous here. Settlements, like churches, have a way of covering almost every field, and we shall find that even in the case of Polytechnics, of which the first object is educational, the social and even the spiritual side of the work is looked upon by many as being no less important. Over every door might be written : *humani nil a me alienum puto*. The organic structure of society is, perhaps, illustrated in this constant failure of agencies of almost every kind to restrict themselves to any closely defined sphere of action. Things hang together in a perplexing tangle of causation beyond possibility of unravelment.

The process of expansion may be easily traced, even if

there be no mind at work with a large view of the complex problems presented. Thus, if at a Settlement the first work started is that of helping in organizing the relief of the poor, the idea of preventive, as well as of remedial, effort asserts itself, and thrift agencies and attempts to teach better household management naturally follow; while at every turn the Poor Law is encountered. Or illness stands out as the immediate cause of trouble, and houses are found to be insanitary or overcrowded. Thus at once the two great branches of local government come into prominence, and to have no voice in them would be to confess impotence. Or, if we take a Settlement that inaugurates a recreative club for 'rough lads,' their utter ignorance appeals, and to deal with it elementary classes are started. It is then found that boys with collars and black jackets have needs as great, but will not mix with the rougher ones, and another club must be formed. The lads grow older; for youths and young men there must be again a separate club; and with this, other agencies become necessary or possible—athletic, educational or social—and the temperance question supervenes. Then there is always the thought of the mothers and sisters, just as, when a beginning is made with them, thought turns to the men and boys. Thus the work gathers as it goes. More knowledge, healthy amusement, temperance, home management and thrift, are needed as well as good local administration; yet still there is no rest. The healthy and happy life, if attained, will be regarded as the channel through which religion should flow in; or, if not, then religion is looked to, as the channel through which these other blessings may flow.

Thus comprehensiveness comes to be the characteristic of all such work, and an age of industrial and scientific specialization finds Churches, Chapels, Missions, Settlements and Polytechnics (like the great supply stores) almost universal in their scope.

Reference has already been made in previous volumes to the four great examples of Settlements in London, and some of the smaller ones have also been mentioned. The four are Toynbee Hall (pioneer, and unsectarian), Oxford House (High Church), Bermondsey (Wesleyan), and the Passmore Edwards Settlement (the latest—also unsectarian). Toynbee Hall stands most for culture, leading the way, teaching the teachers, lifting and ennobling all ; Oxford House, for religious enthusiasm, shining out through club life and social intercourse of man with man ; the Wesleyans, for making much of little things, for touching life at every point, and, in the same spirit that breathes also from their great missions, finding nothing ‘common or unclean’ ; and finally the organization that goes by Mr. Passmore Edwards’ name—while making a special feature of supplementing the work done by the elementary schools—stands out for bringing fresh thought and enterprise to all that it undertakes.

The serious spirit and careful work of the Women’s Settlement in Southwark, with its restrained religious tone, has also been described, and reference made to the ‘simple, sober, unsensational’ methods pursued by the ladies of the Cheltenham College Guild established in Bethnal Green ; and, indeed, each effort of the kind throughout London has, I believe, been mentioned in its place, though in several instances with less detail than I should have liked to give.

The basis on which Settlements rest is the willingness of men or women to accept life in districts deliberately selected because they offer a special field for social work, and to take up the work which life so situated offers. Instead of a profession leading to a certain style of life in a certain locality, the order is reversed ; for, starting with the locality chosen, the style of life and the character of the work follow. In

place of working in order to live, it is living in order to work.

Districts are chosen in which the standard of life is low, and the opportunities of the inhabitants correspondingly meagre. The gain to those who venture on the step and 'settle' in these surroundings may perhaps prove greater than that which comes to those among whom they live, but the motive of the Settlement is the latter, and not the former, gain. It is not for their own souls' sake that the action is taken.

But in both directions—their own good and that of the people amongst whom they dwell—success may be measured by the extent to which a certain inherent artificiality of the situation is overcome, so that those who adopt the life can be at ease with the people, with each other, and with themselves.

Settlements are still experimental. They are far from having reached the clear waters of an assured position; but are a success, if only because they have widened out the idea, and given new form to the practice of neighbourliness, and have thus made for social solidarity. They are few in number and financially weak, and even as to those with whom they come in touch can show no large totals; but raze them from London and London would be noticeably the poorer. They do not, perhaps necessarily, represent so high a personal ideal as that of Edward Denison, who lived alone in a poor street in East London; but they are more practical than isolated effort; and in spite of the drawbacks of community life, and the artificialities and partial separation from ordinary social life which are involved, they give scope for the very effective concentration of many minds on one general aim. Their stability in the future depends on the amount of personal service they can secure of the kind that is needed; finance hardly enters, except as to extensions in supplying the necessary buildings; but it is to be

hoped that the means as well as the men and women may be forthcoming, for the conditions of London life will call for their presence in many districts for many years to come.

Extracts indicating the objects Settlements set before themselves :—

(1.) The object for which the settlement exists is to diffuse knowledge, truth and love, to help the classes who are brought together in London to live and work in concord, to teach the richer how to help the poorer, and the poorer how to help themselves, to raise the ideals of life, and strengthen faith in God. For this object the spirit of true religion is the strongest prompter and the best guide.—*Canon Barnett, in the 18th Annual Report of Toynbee Hall.*

(2.) The Oxford House in Bethnal Green is established in order that Oxford men may take part in the social and religious work of the Church in East London; that they may learn something of the life of the poor; may try to better the conditions of the working classes as regards health and recreation, mental culture, and spiritual teaching; and may offer an example, so far as in them lies, of a simple and religious life.—*Statement of Aims of the House.*

(3.) *Bermondsey Settlement—General Aims.*

1. To bring additional force and attractiveness to Christian work.
2. To become a centre of social life, where all classes may meet together on equal terms for healthful intercourse and recreation.
3. To give facilities for the study of literature, history, science, and art.
4. To bring men together to discuss general and special social evils, and to seek their remedy.
5. To take such part in local administration and philanthropy as may be possible.
6. And so to do all this that it shall be perfectly clear that no mere sectarian advantage is sought, but that it shall be possible for all good men to associate themselves with our work.—*Eighth Annual Report.*

(4.) The experience of those who grapple with the facts of life among the poor, shows that what we really want is men and women—strong, wise, voluntary, and devoted to personal influence and service. Institutions and organizations are the necessary instruments of persons. But it is *persons* that the human and social problem needs, persons coming forward out of a great sympathy, as leaders and guides, the friends and stays of those whose higher nature perishes under the stress of life.—*Bermondsey Settlement 8th Annual Report.* "

(5.) *Browning Hall, Walworth. Statement by the Warden.*

Quoting the words which Sir Walter Besant applied to Browning Hall: "The key-note of all such work as this is, for the workers, personal service—for the people, the influence of example," the Warden added: I would rather say the mutual action and reaction of neighbourliness. We try to help the people, and they help us. All our work is grouped round one great central idea of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is our endeavour to make real the kingdom of God by everyday service in every day life; that is the sovereign conception of the Gospel. We seek to bear witness to the great claim of Jesus Christ upon the whole life. We call no man and no interest common

§ 2

POLYTECHNICS

Strange as it may seem, the name 'Polytechnic' had at the outset in this country no immediate connection with technical training. It was simply the earlier designation of the building in Regent Street taken over by Mr. Quintin Hogg in 1881,* and adapted by him to what are now recognised as polytechnic purposes. Previously the word and the building were associated

* Recently, to the universal regret, the scene of his untimely and sudden death.

in the public mind with diving bells and other scientific entertainments, culminating in Professor Pepper and his ghost. Mr. Quintin Hogg's Institute was the first, and is still by far the greatest, of the London Polytechnics, but there are now a number of others in different parts, as the following list shows :—

North of the Thames :

Regent Street Polytechnic.

East London Technical Institute (People's Palace),
with Branch at Bow and Bromley Institute.

Northern Polytechnic (Holloway).

South-West London Polytechnic (Chelsea).

City Polytechnic, consisting of—

Birkbeck Institute.

City of London College.

Northampton Institute (Clerkenwell).

South of the Thames:

Battersea Polytechnic.

Borough Polytechnic, with Branches at Norwood
and Bermondsey.

Goldsmiths' Institute (New Cross), with Branch
at Hayes Court.

Woolwich Polytechnic.

The Cass Institute in Aldgate has just been established, and the North-Western Polytechnic (St. Pancras) is projected, but has been stopped for the time by financial difficulties.

In addition to those mentioned in the above list there are various cognate, but smaller institutions, scattered throughout London, such as Morley College, the educational annexe of the Victoria Model Music Hall in Waterloo Road, and Mr. Baker's Church Institute in Upper Tooting, Dr. Clifford's Westbourne Park Institute, and the Queen's Park College and Technical Institute, each of which has been referred to locally. There are also the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, the smaller

College for Men and Women in Queen's Square, and others of less importance, or less well known.

If Polytechnics were solely educational no reference to them would be called for here, but they are much more complex in aim. They touch, indeed, all sides of life, though not equally, the religious element being in some cases entirely absent, and the recreative side, though always present more or less, being at times not only subordinate, but quite unimportant, while the educational side, which is the only one fully recognised by all, is taken up in very varying spirit. I therefore feel justified in treating them in company with 'Settlements,' as social institutions.

The lack of uniformity applies to constitution as well as aim, and combined with much elasticity in administration, has given great experimental value to the movement, not only from successes achieved in many directions, but also from the lessons of failure.

Among them all, the first place remains with the great institution in Regent Street. The late founder's own account of its origin and aims is so interesting that I have transcribed it at the end of the present chapter, but I may here quote one sentence: "We wanted," he says, "to develop our institute into a place which should recognise that God had given man more than one side to his character; and where we could gratify any reasonable taste, whether athletic, intellectual, spiritual or social."

With this may be compared Dr. Birkbeck's words describing the institution which he founded in 1823, and which still bears his name. It was, he said, founded especially for the purpose of giving instruction to students in the principles of the arts they practise; but more generally it was to be "a temple to the increase of knowledge, to the diffusion of the riches of the mind, and to the amelioration of the human intellect."

In both of these quotations the note is sounded of a personal ideal, but this quality is rather lacking in the prospectus of one of the newer Polytechnics, "established to provide for the inhabitants of Islington and the neighbouring parts of North London, and especially for the industrial classes, the means of obtaining a sound general, scientific, technical and commercial education at small cost; and also to afford facilities for physical training and for recreation;" and when we attempt to trace to its source any very marked success attained by any of these institutes, it is the personal element that is disclosed. Asked what was the first requisite for a Polytechnic, Mr. Hogg replied, 'Somebody's heart's blood;' and his own was given.

So it is that, although as public institutions they secure their support mainly on account of the educational advantages they offer, Polytechnics as humanizing influences require to be something more than mere centres of instruction to which students repair for the hour or two of their classes and then leave. They must aim, if they are to be as many-sided in their usefulness as experience has shown to be possible, at being social as well as educational institutes; clubs as well as 'academies.'

At the Regent Street Institute, above all, this is fully recognised, and its members and students represent no less than one-third of the whole number enrolled by the various Polytechnics; or seventeen thousand out of about fifty thousand. Year by year the work of this institute has expanded, the number of members having increased each year without a break. New members are warmly welcomed. A tradition has been established which prevents cliquishness and leads all to 'try and make the new member feel that he is amongst friends; and besides, the 'heart's blood' already mentioned, the use of the 'oil can' is not neglected by those at the head, who

make it their constant business to see that everything runs smoothly and healthily. New members who wish to make friends, and who seek opportunities for recreation, are urged to join some of the many clubs or societies which practically represent the social side of the institute. The time of greatest leakage among members is found to be after a single term, when no 'section' has been joined, and friends have not been made; once fairly started in some section a member is, they say, almost certain to be held for a time. The net of friendship constrains him.

The classes provided are excellent. It is reckoned that for all purposes from four thousand to five thousand different individuals use the building nightly. There is a library of over eight thousand volumes, and there are subsidiary societies without end in which all aims are considered, all tastes catered for. The numbers to draw upon make everything possible. The gymnasium counts one thousand members; the athletic club has cricket and football sections, each strong enough to put eight teams into the field on Saturday afternoons; and on the religious side the members of the Christian Mission are able to maintain a regular series of Sunday and weekday services. But most stress is laid on the purely social side, as being not only an essential complement of the life of such an institute, but the most difficult to secure; more difficult than educational, athletic, and religious put together. Yet the means sound so simple. Just 'one or two men of the right sort to be in and out constantly, learning to know the members, bringing them together, suggesting, planning, knowing how to choose leaders and when to delegate responsibility, and having no other immediate concern with the work.' These are the men with the oil cans.

The story of the People's Palace is a record of experiments, including not a few failures; and the chief outcome of all that has been planned and done

during half a century, and with the aid of the Beaumont legacy, the munificence of the Drapers' Company, and large public subscriptions is—not the bright palace of delight pictured by Sir Walter Besant, but the East London Technical Institute, with two or three thousand evening students and a day school of nearly five hundred scholars. Those who attend its classes are drawn from a wide area, and the institute has practically no social side. The library is, indeed, a people's library, open free to the public; but the great Queen's Hall, which was opened by Queen Victoria in 1887, and the adjoining winter garden, are only reminders of a scheme that has failed. They are by no means unused, but there is now nothing of the nature of 'membership of the Palace,' and when people come it is for a concert, an organ recital, or an entertainment, just as other audiences are attracted to the other Queen's Hall in Langham Place, or, for the matter of that, to the Paragon Music-hall in Mile End.

At the Battersea Polytechnic, also, those joining come from a very extended area—Clapham, Balham, Streatham and Norwood being mentioned—besides a large number from Battersea itself; but these last include none from the poor streets of the neighbourhood, whose inhabitants are only touched, if touched at all, by the Saturday concerts in the great hall.

The Northampton Institute is still quite young. It was intended to be the chief centre of the technical and recreative sections of the City Polytechnic; but of the members of the other branches who have the right to use the gymnasium and the social rooms, and to join in the clubs provided for in the splendid building in St. John Street Road, few do so. The "City" does not, it appears, mix readily with Clerkenwell.

At the Borough Polytechnic the Regent Street model is more nearly followed than at any other. Here, a distinctive feature, wise and considerate in

policy, although not yet very effective in practice, is found in the affiliation of other institutes, the members of which are accepted at the lowest scale of fees, as though they were members of the polytechnic itself. Thirteen local institutes come in under this rule.

A considerable effort is made to give prominence to the recreative and social side at the Goldsmiths' Institute at New Cross, but otherwise the rest do not demand special notice here. They are mainly educational centres.

The general limit of age imposed for those who wish to benefit by the social provision made by the Polytechnic Institutes is from sixteen to twenty-five, and both sexes can join in almost everything. As regards the classes there is very rarely any restriction as to age. At Regent Street there is a separate organization for girls and young women with two thousand members, but they can join in any class at the parent institute. At the Borough Polytechnic about one-third of those who enter are females.

In general, those who join these institutions may be described as belonging to the lower middle or to the more intelligent of the wage-earning classes. An analysis of the South-Western (Chelsea) Polytechnic gives the following as the more important divisions:—

Apprentices . . .	119	Engineers (other) . .	85
Bricklayers . . .	30	Painters . . .	15
Carpenters and		Porters, &c. . .	48
Joiners . . .	64	Plumbers . . .	37
Civil Servants . .	46	Plasterers . . .	21
Clerks . . .	326	Shop Assistants . .	107
Draughtsmen . . .	26	Shopkeepers . . .	57
Dressmakers . . .	39	Teachers . . .	128
Electrical Engineers	47		

The whole resources of London under this heading of 'Polytechnic,' with allied agencies, cannot be measured with any exactitude, but the membership is variously estimated at from forty thousand to fifty thousand (*vide* 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' Vol. XXXI), while the total number of regular scholars in the evening schools of the London School Board does not (on the same authority) exceed one hundred thousand, and, I should say, is probably considerably smaller; as against this, the total population between thirteen and twenty-one years of age within the metropolitan area is over seven hundred thousand.

It is not to be expected that the scope of Polytechnic institutions can be so far extended as to include every social grade, but it is certain that the number of those who might with profit to themselves attend the classes, or take advantage of the various other opportunities offered, far exceeds that of those who do so. It is, I think, also certain that while the whole population is greater every year, the 'new middle class,' to whose needs and tastes these institutions specially appeal, shows the greatest increase of all.

EXTRACT.

From Mr. Quintin Hogg's Account of How the Regent Street Polytechnic was founded.

My first experience of religious work of any kind was holding a Bible class at Eton. I left Eton at the end of 1863, and in the beginning of 1864 tried my apprentice hand at London boys. Originally my intention was not so much to go into boys' work as mission work. On the other hand, I was painfully struck at the utter absence of any possible means of innocent recreation, to say nothing of instruction, for the ragged children. I had never been brought into contact with real poverty and want before, and felt almost as though I should go mad unless I did something to try and help some of the wretched little chaps I used to find running about the streets. My first effort was to get

a couple of crossing-sweepers and offer to teach them to read. With an empty beer-bottle for a candlestick, and a tallow candle for illumination, two crossing-sweepers as pupils and a couple of Bibles as reading-books, what grew into the Polytechnic was practically started [a policeman's lantern was seen in the distance, and the boys bolted] I did not think my first essay a very successful one, and I cast about to know how in the world I could learn the language of these boys and ascertain their real wants and their ways of life. I bought a second-hand shoeblack's suit, also a box, brushes, and all the necessary fittings. With this I used to go out two or three nights a week for about six months, blacking boots and sleeping out with the boys, on barges, under tarpaulins, on a ledge in the Adelphi Arches and elsewhere. Of course, my father knew nothing at all about it. My real object, of course, was to learn how the boys lived, what they fed on, what it cost them to live, and how they could be best reached. Of course, I was not boot-blackening all the time; sometimes I would go about Covent Garden Market, or holding horses, or doing any odd jobs which I saw boys doing.

The following winter the ragged school began in real earnest; at first only as a day school. I had a very earnest female teacher in charge, and she used to beg me to open the room in the evenings for the purpose of teaching the elder lads [the experiment was tried, but a riot ensued, and Mr. Hogg was hastily summoned] On arriving, I found the whole school in an uproar, the gas fittings had been wrenched off and used as batons by the boys for striking the police, while the rest of the boys were pelting them with slates. I felt rather alarmed for the teacher, and rushing into the darkened room, called out for the boys to instantly stop and be quiet. To my amazement, the riot was stopped immediately. In two minutes the police were able to go quietly away, and for the first time in my life I learned I had some kind of instinct or capacity for the management of elder boys. From that day to 1868, when I had to go abroad I scarcely missed the ragged school for a single night. The class prospered amazingly; our little room got so

crammed that I used to divide the school into two sections of sixty each, the first lot coming from 7 to 8.30, and the second lot from 8.30 to 10. There I used to sit between the two classes, perched on the back of a form, dining on my "pint of thick and two doorsteps," as the boys used to call coffee and bread and treacle, taking one class at reading and the other at writing or arithmetic. Each section closed with a ten minutes' service and prayer.

During all this time the boys had been getting of a very different character and appearance to those who first came. When we first opened the school, no less than five boys came absolutely naked, except for their mothers' shawls which were pinned around them. Five separate gangs of thieves attended the school, all of whom within six months were earning their livelihood more or less respectably. Those who showed any desire to get on were passed through the Shoeblack Society and apprenticed to various trades. The young mechanics began to bring their fellow apprentices and other mechanics to the school, so that the truly ragged, unkempt boys of 1864 had been succeeded by the orderly and fairly dressed lads of 1868. In the meantime we had also increased our premises

In 1869 we moved into Castle Street. In 1871, such a number of respectable young fellows had taken to coming to the night school that it became a question to my mind whether we were justified in encouraging them to attend what was to all intents and purposes a ragged school. I suggested to them the formation of an institute thirty-five joined that night, and for years afterwards they did a good deal of the teaching for me in connection with the ragged school. The institute, however, thrived amazingly, the little house was packed every night, and in 1878 we were obliged to make a further move, this time to some very much larger premises in Long Acre. Here we were able to increase our numbers to five hundred. Here also we started classes of a more ambitious character than any we had attempted before, and got in connection with the Science and Art Department

By this time I had got pretty well into my mind what it was I wanted in the way of an institute, the idea in my mind being that no institute then existing was sufficiently

catholic in its tastes and aims. There were purely religious associations like the Y. M. C. A., most of which had neither athletics nor even sufficient educational attractions. There were educational institutions, of which the Birkbeck may be taken as a notable example, which made no effort at all either on the spiritual or physical side; there were athletic clubs, but these, too, confined themselves solely to athletics. What we wanted to develop our institute into was a place which should recognise that God had given man more than one side to his character, and where we could gratify any reasonable taste, whether athletic, intellectual, spiritual or social.

At the end of 1881, the Polytechnic came into the market The first night we began to take in new members, over one thousand new fellows booked. In those days I used personally to see every member who joined the institute. I booked our first new Poly. member at a quarter past five in the evening, and worked steadily on until a quarter past one next morning, when the last fellow left the building.

I had designed the place for two thousand members, but during the first winter the number reached six thousand eight hundred, and every season since then the increase has been continuous, until we reached our present numbers.

The institutions described in this chapter may be felt to belong rather to the educational or social than to the religious side of the influences bearing upon life in London; but they provide a link of connection, a bridge across which young feet may pass to and fro.

[Mr. Hogg is at least the sixth great man whose influence upon the social conditions and religious life of London has been cut short by death while I have been trying to record it. The others I would mention here are Archbishop Temple, Bishop Creighton, Father Dolling, Mr. Hugh Price Hughes, and Dr. Parker; each (as was Mr. Quintin Hogg also) a master man. It would, indeed, be difficult to point among the living to any six equal to those who are gone.]

CHAPTER X

ASPECTS OF RELIGION

§ 1

RELIGION AND CLASS

No class has a monopoly of religious-minded persons. If only those are to be counted as religious whose whole souls are filled with the faith they profess, then each class yields its proportion of the few who are chosen out of the many that are called. Or if we take the broadest view, and accept as religious all those whose nature is open to good influences and who, thus helped and fostered, grow straight and true, like the trees, towards heaven, again we find no class advantage. But as regards certain religious developments, class conditions seem paramount, alike with those whose religion absorbs their entire spiritual life, whose sole anchorage it then becomes ; and those who merely find in it a useful framework upon which to rest sympathies of which the roots are widely spread ; and most of all with those for whom religious observances are only matters of taste and habit and who hardly have a spiritual life at all.

There are some amongst the oldest of English families whose traditions hold them faithful to the Church of Rome, but with these and a few other exceptions of less importance, the great bulk of those of rank and station amongst our people belong to the Church of

England, and their relations with the Church are easy and confident. They are not only steady supporters, but for the most part, truly and warmly attached members. For them the union of Church and State is more than a phrase. Both in town and country they and their families attend the services of the Church; many of their women devote their lives to Church work, while from their men have come large numbers of clergy and some of the greatest of religious philanthropists. Their devotional expression is, as a rule, cold and unemotional, but with no class is religion more completely identified with duty. They belong to all branches of the Church: High or Low, or what may perhaps be called 'Central,' and ask, as a rule, no further licence. Doctrinal difficulties do not trouble them much; their balance is not easily upset. The same mental as well as social position is occupied, and the same course pursued from generation to generation, handed down from father to son, and from mother to daughter. All their traditions are conservative. The part played by religion in their lives is as a rule by no means large but it is constant.

Those who come next in the social scale, who fill the principal places in the Civil Service, officer the Army and Navy, and plead in our courts of law, are also mostly members of the Church of England, and supply the Church with many of her clergy. Amongst this class religious observance is usual, but the attitude towards religion is perhaps less calm than that described above, it may be because less simply connected with duty. With these people religious feeling when it arises is very likely to take the shape of reaction and revolt from the stress of worldly existence, which is otherwise apt to be the law of their being, and then they, and especially the women, fling themselves into good works, or rush into extremes of religious doctrines and practices. There are among them many restless

minds and lives with no safe anchorage ; and it is the troubled condition of such souls, more than anything else, that has given rise to the wild hopes of Rome for the conversion of England, and to the dreams of others who live in expectation of a new spiritual dispensation, accompanied by strange credulities and dabbings in mediæval magic.

The borders of this class have been extended by increase of wealth, but the new comers have by the very law of their advancement shared to the full in the stress of worldly life, and in the characteristics it produces both with men and women. If belonging previously to some religious denomination outside the Establishment, they have usually left it behind them and joined the Church of England ; but it is much to be wished that with the general rise in social status of the Nonconformist bodies, this unsatisfactory form of conventional development may come to an end ; and of this change there are now some hopeful signs.

With the next social layer, consisting of legal and other professional men, some civil servants, men of business, wholesale traders and large retailers, the Nonconformist bodies—Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Wesleyans, with Unitarians and the Society of Friends, and a few of the Baptist congregations which can lay claim to social standing—take the lead of the Church of England. Class position amongst the Nonconformists goes very much by congregations, the worshippers sorting themselves in this way much more than do those who attend the parish churches. Amongst these people those of highest social grade share in the worldly striving and push of the class above, but their religious anchorage, with the Nonconformists at least, is likely to be more secure. The place of religion in their lives is fully recognised. If they succeed they give thanks to God, it is ‘the Lord who prospers them.’ The language they use often savours of cant,

and there may be sheer hypocrisy sometimes, but in general their religion is to them a daily reality, and they are content in it and untroubled by doubt. If their souls are shaken it is by the personal sense of sin and of the need for salvation, not by revolt against the weariness of life and the hollowness of religious professions, nor by any doubts as to the foundations upon which the whole structure of organized religion is reared.

Those of this social grade who belong to the Church of England, make less display of religion than their Nonconformist brethren, and except in the extreme Low Church section, are not so prone to invoke the sense of sin. They take religion more easily, but in a very simple, unquestioning, wholesome spirit.

A little lower in the social scale, among those of inferior rank in the same professions, men of business in both wholesale and retail trade, with 'lower division' civil servants and an enormous variety of salaried people, we have a heterogeneous group of whom it is even more difficult to speak as one class.

The oratorical division of our population into 'masses' and 'classes' entirely omits this great section, and yet it is, perhaps, mainly of its members that most large general audiences gathered in any part of London are constituted. The word 'popular' is invariably used to describe these audiences, to bespeak their presence, and to characterize the entertainment offered, as well as the prices which, it is inferred, will be readily paid. Whether for theatre, concert, or exhibition, these people can afford to pay their way, and they form the bulk of most large religious assemblages. I have elsewhere spoken of them as the new middle class, and though in strict arithmetical sense somewhat above the middle line, the social position which they hold between the masses and the classes is truly a central one.

But the limits are not well defined. The ranks of

this body are constantly recruited from below ; and while some may fall back, others pass on, from them or through them, to the ranks above. This gives elasticity and the range is wide. The characteristics vary greatly. If I think of these people as young and aspiring and full of energy in all kinds of directions, my mind turns also to the failures, worn out and broken down, and to the 'pathos of pinched lives.' If I think of them as achieving solid comfort regardless of show, I remember that it is not always so ; for many, 'going on too fast, or attempting too much, have tied round their necks a burthen of debt. Moreover there are decreasing as well as increasing incomes. Thus some lag behind, sick or sorry, but on the whole it is an advancing crowd filled with confidence and energy ; and to this crowd, as we have repeatedly seen, all the religious bodies appeal with some measure of success, each after its own particular fashion, and able each to find sympathizers who may become adherents, and finally active members, of some particular church.

It is impossible to estimate with any exactness or certainty the proportion of this large and much mixed section of the people, that may be regarded as religious ; but many of the Nonconformist churches are entirely filled from it, as are most of the great preaching mission services, while many scattered members attend the Church of England. They value greatly and therefore seek the social side of religion, but furnish devoted workers and hold their religious opinions firmly. These opinions they have generally inherited, and, on the whole, rarely change. Among the great variety of doctrine and practice offered in any neighbourhood in London, the various members of this class can usually find some church or chapel that will suit them.

I have made no attempt to classify those whose rank is the stamp of Education or the seal of Art. On them, whatever their social grade, organised religion has less

than average hold. They too, each in their own way, are teachers and preachers.

No class lines in England are strictly maintained ; everywhere there is some interchange between class and class, but the uncertainty of the division between lower middle and upper working class is quite special in character, and may perhaps point to a coming change of great importance, if it should indicate a diversity of status amongst the working classes that is likely to break up their solidarity of sentiment. In this direction several causes are now operating.

The great section of the population, which passes by the name of the working classes, lying socially between the lower middle class and the 'poor,' remains, as a whole, outside of all the religious bodies, whether organized as churches or as missions ; and as those of them who do join any church become almost indistinguishable from the class with which they then mix, the change that has really come about is not so much *of* as *out of* the class to which they have belonged. Other causes operate in the same direction. The organization of modern industry finds room for much cheap clerk work for which the elementary schools ensure a copious supply, and requires also, on the practical side of the work, men of skill and character, who earn higher wages than these clerks. Thus the financial distinction between clerk and working man tends to break down, and when for any purpose they consort together, or make common cause, the social distinction is apt to break down too. Moreover, many of the children of working men become clerks. So that finally where working men are dwelling in the same streets, and under the same conditions, with well paid clerks and others of like station, the two classes approximate in their lives and habits. Socially it depends on the individual character of the man or of his wife, and

financially, on the way in which their money is spent, whether a first-class workman and his family remain in, or, in effect, step out of the class to which they have hitherto belonged. At the same time the cleavage between the upper and lower grades of manual labour has become more marked industrially.

On industrial questions it may be that high and low class labour may continue to coalesce, as has hitherto been the case, in spite, frequently, of sectionally divergent interests; and cheap clerks, even though of working-class parentage, may follow in the wake of those of higher grade; but away from workshop and office and as regards other than trade questions, social influences will prevail. To trace all the possibilities of this movement would take me too far; but the point I desire to make is that in this way a road has been opened between the religious bodies and the working classes, by which, though it can hardly be said that these classes are reached, an increasing proportion do pass under the influence of organized religion and recognise its claims. But meanwhile the bulk of the regular wage-earning class still remain untouched, except that their children attend Sunday school.

Of this class many—it may be because of illness or extravagance or bad management, a large family or low pay—belong to those we call ‘the poor.’ So far as they remain independent they are to be counted with the rest of the class. But great efforts are made to reach them; and their needs open the door to attempts which lie in the middle ground between religious and charitable care. These attempts, mingled inextricably with those made to help people who can no longer pretend to independence, are the mainstay of missionary activity in London, and have been sufficiently described. They are summed up in the pregnant phrase, ‘practical Christianity.’ By it almost all are touched, but while the good done on the material side to these

pauperized people is questionable and undermined by many inherent drawbacks, the profit to them on the religious side is still more doubtful.

As regards religious influence the Roman Catholic poor stand out as an exception. They constitute a class apart, being as a rule devout and willing to contribute something from their earnings towards the support of their schools and the maintenance of their religion ; but at the same time they are great beggars, as well as heavy drinkers, and there is no sign that the form which practical Christianity takes in their case helps to make them in these respects either more self-reliant or more self-restrained.

§ 2

RELIGION AND THE YOUNG

The systematic doctrinal training given to the children of the rich, who are mainly members of the Church of England, is fairly thorough until the age of Confirmation. This rite often brings with it a real spiritual awakening, and is almost always a solemn epoch. But except among extreme Evangelicals or Ritualists, no effort is made to stimulate religious emotion among the young; rather are efforts made to check any manifestations of the kind should they appear, for they are recognised as unhealthy. But as the minds of the young people open out, and as parental control slackens, there follow at school or college or elsewhere, discussions on beliefs and doctrines with their companions of like age, in which speech is very free, breaking loose from all authority, and the inmost thoughts find utterance and meet with sympathy even from those who most deeply disagree. These hours are amongst the best that life can offer; no *calium theologicum* has yet arisen in the eager and honest souls of these young people.

The regular religious training of the highly educated rich ends, as a rule, with Confirmation. I do not ignore the efforts made by the clergy to alter this state of things by establishing guilds of various kinds, but among the upper classes the number affected, even among young women, is not great and young men are hardly touched at all. The influence of the clergy is of small account compared to that of companions of their own age. Many take everything lightly and are scarcely moved by religion, though they submit to its forms and do not question the truth of its doctrines; and others, taking life seriously, find in the accepted forms all they require. Some pass through terrible times of difficulty and doubt and even of

despair, and perhaps may then seek spiritual counsel, while there are others who can support with untroubled mind the shaking of the foundations of belief. Amongst young men absolute free thought is very common.

The abstention of parents from interference or any serious attempt to guide the views of the young, the boys especially, after early youth, is limited in one direction, very logically: if not interfered with, neither must they interfere with others. In an orthodox home heterodox discussions are not allowed; and a son who broke this rule would encounter serious disapproval. For such discussions there are suitable times, places and companions, and these are perhaps rarely found at home.

How far this failure to guide, and the consequent establishment of a republic of religious thought among the young, extends downwards in the social scale, I hardly know; but we certainly find an entirely different state of things among the Nonconformists of the lower middle class, and I think it is so with most Nonconformists, though less markedly so amongst the rich. With them all, home and church are more completely combined than is the case with the Church of England; parent and pastor are more closely allied. With those of lower middle class, when the boys live mostly at home and where there is no governess, the home tie is certainly stronger. We see the result with Nonconformist Churches in all the arrangements for occupying the leisure of the young, among which deliberate religious training finds its place; with the Baptists and Presbyterians in huge Bible classes, with Wesleyans in the guild that goes by Wesley's name, and amongst other Methodists in their prolonged Sunday school system; while amongst nearly all, the American institution of 'Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavour' has taken root and spread wonderfully.

Thus from their first lesson at their mother's knee till they 'decide for Christ' and attain Church membership, a great effort is made to hold the young safely 'in the bondage of faith and the service of God.' Many may still slip through the net thus drawn, but young Nonconformists are far more tightly held than, as a rule, are Church of England young people of a similar class. Against this laxity the High Churches struggle hard, and, besides guilds, would fain make use of the confessional; while the Low Church people are ready enough to adopt Nonconformist methods, but do so at a disadvantage, as they fail to introduce the popular democratic element to which the Nonconformist success is largely due.

On the other hand, when, as is the case with the classes below, little or no support can as a rule be expected from the homes, and the inculcation of religious ideas depends entirely upon school teaching, the Church of England distinctly leads. Numerically, indeed, the Sunday school children are fairly shared with the Nonconformist churches or with missions unconnected with any particular denomination, but the teaching in the Church schools is more systematic; besides which the Church controls almost all the voluntary elementary schools, and in them is able to give special attention to religious teaching. In recent years, much special effort has been thrown into this work: with what ultimate result remains to be seen, and subject to the practical operation of the Education Act which is now projected for London.

Elaborate doctrinal teaching may be inculcated in childhood, but its influence is not likely to last unless maintained by the atmosphere of the home or unless supported by social usage. It is to social usage that the upper classes trust, and it is in the union of home and church that we find the strength of the Nonconformists as regards the religious guidance of their

children. Thus with regard to the working classes we seem to arrive at a deadlock. There is no hope of social usage, and to create religious homes a new generation of religious-minded parents must arise; while until we have the social usage or the religious homes all advance is stopped. It is a serious *impasse*, yet something may be done to avoid it. Individual working-class homes may be brought within the religious circle, and individual young people may be induced to join in the life and work of the Churches.

To this gradual movement, largely dependent as it is upon economic progress, general education and a rising standard of life provide the key. Beyond this, is it too much to hope that as a result of education a ferment may be set up in the minds of young people of the working classes, who, thereupon, discussing for themselves and amongst themselves the ways of God with man, a subject which is never stale, shall reach at last the confines of religion?

Such a movement could only be gradual; an influence percolating downward; but would be helped forward by every other improvement that can be made in the conditions of life. It would apply first only to the very cream of the working classes, but might in time reach all those (and they would become an increasing proportion) who earn fair wages for fair work, and have learnt how to manage their own lives.

For the many who are, and perhaps must for long, if not always, remain below the level of independent existence, the work of the churches is, for the most part, based on charitable assistance. The aim as regards the training of the children hardly rises above order, discipline, cleanliness, decency, and general good behaviour. Religion must be reached through these things, not these things through religion. They are the road, though religion may be the goal.

§ 3

RELIGION AND CHARITY

Much has already been said on this subject in the preceding portions of this book, but it presents many complications, and I would wish, if possible, to draw the threads together.

First we have the great undeniable fact of the existence of poverty. Hundreds of thousands of our neighbours in London are ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-housed, and are, from a multitude of causes, ever at the mercy of any misfortune an ill wind may bring. And to balance this, there is the other great fact, that the neighbours of these poor people, in numbers perhaps no fewer, are endowed in varying degrees with surplus wealth.

The position is not a new one; but in spite of the familiar words of Scripture, some surprise has been felt at its recurrence in our days, and at its persistence under the sound system of economics upon which we congratulate ourselves.

In response to the moral shock of this contrast, religion in the past has led some to renounce wealth entirely, and others to give of their substance largely in alms, while the Church made use of both the money and lives offered, and to motives of pure humanity added 'for your soul's sake.' The system thus adopted by society palliated evils which were accepted as inevitable, satisfied the consciences of the rich or enlisted them in God's service, and strengthened the Church; but as regards the poor, the results have not proved satisfactory in the past, and neither response nor results are greatly different now.

We do not in our day seek to save our souls at the expense of our pockets. Even among Roman Catholics the 'indulgences' granted in acknowledgment of almsgiving can hardly be regarded seriously as an item in the great account to be settled in purgatory. But

we still find a salve for our consciences in supporting charitable undertakings, or if the soul demands it, give our lives ; and the churches still seek to organize all in the name of God. So far, the position seems practically unaltered, but it is subject to the pressure of two ideas which are becoming generally admitted : the one being that poverty is aggravated by ill-considered attempts to relieve it ; and the other, that the cause of religion when associated with charitable gifts suffers in the eyes of those who are outside of its influence, the motives of both giver and receiver being regarded by the on-looker with suspicion.

If these ideas, the theoretical acceptance of which is now common and even general amongst us, seem to have little influence upon the administration of relief to the poor, it is because of practical difficulties which the charitable and religious find well-nigh insuperable, and which cannot be ignored when, in order to judge of their action, we attempt to place ourselves in the position of those who seek to 'minister to the poor.'

In the first place, it will, I think, be admitted that the religious bodies cannot 'leave it alone.' They may succeed in dissociating relief from religious propaganda, though that is not so easy as it sounds, but they cannot suffer the poor to be uncared for or stand aside entirely while others do the work. The Church of England rightly recognises a duty to its parishioners, and beyond this there is the call to help brethren who may be in need, which Christians, of whatever sect, draw from the teaching of their Master, and which, too, every kind man finds in the dictates of his own heart. Thus something must be done. But 'what' and 'how' remain questions to be asked and answered.

How many sided the subject is, may best be shown if I draw once more on my store of opinions expressed by those whose evidence we have sought.

It is undoubtedly true, as one witness says, that

‘an enormous amount is given in one way or another,’ and that ‘the figures stated by the churches do not represent half that is given indirectly.’ That much of this is wasted, and worse than wasted, is equally incontestable. ‘You can always get along without doing any work,’ was candidly admitted by parents of some of his boys to the master of a Board school in a poor neighbourhood. While hardened recipients come thus with hands outstretched, desert has often to be discovered. ‘The most real poverty is that which hides itself.’ ‘True sufferers have to be sought out.’ But the importunity of those who are always ready to play the beggar’s rôle sometimes teaches its lesson. One witness used to give bread to all who asked at the door, but found that the bread was nearly always thrown away. ‘Relief careful,’ we are told; ‘life not worth living otherwise.’ ‘Give nothing at the door or we should be overwhelmed.’ ‘Dare not give to any one in * * * * * Courts—give one, give all;’ while another says simply that he is careful in giving now, having been ‘taken in’ so much—all of which remarks indicate very clearly the usual character of the applications received. Poverty of this kind not only involves but is often attributable to ‘want of self-respect.’ Still many of the religiously charitable do not shrink at all, but find in such demands a spiritual opportunity. One who spoke familiarly of the ‘awful lot of charitable ‘relief’ needed, frankly defended the practice of easy giving: ‘It binds the people to you,’ he remarked, and then enunciated the sweepingly fallacious doctrine that ‘if by inquiry real need is shown, giving ceases to be charity and becomes justice.’

Where care is exercised, we sometimes hear that it is difficult to deal with the money poured in (this was for children’s dinners in the East End); while from a North London parish, where ‘the poor are a pet hobby of the rich,’ and it is found difficult to

guide charitable action 'without destroying the generous impulse,' the trouble is that so much is given. 'The money spent usually does more harm than good,' comes from another North London parish, and the whole position is, no doubt too hastily, summed up by one witness in the phrase 'the less given, the less required,' which reaches us from St. George's-in-the-East; whilst to 'try to do as little harm as possible,' is the humble aim of one who regards the problem as insoluble.

That the poor have three or four different people calling, nearly all giving something, is a common story, and in the competition to relieve, we have been told that tickets are even, in some cases, thrown into the houses. But the impossibility of visiting, without giving, is largely dwelt upon. 'Unless you help them what will they think of your Christianity.' 'You can't go into starving homes without giving.' 'You cannot visit and do nothing.' 'Tender-hearted Sisters' are a difficulty, and one of the missionaries speaks of not liking to go where he 'cannot cope with the misery.' Very generally the visitors have 'tickets' to distribute. One parson says he could not keep his visitors going without them, and another, that he supposed his ladies 'never go without giving away a ticket,' adding, that he disliked it extremely but could do nothing. 'I am afraid,' said a Roman Catholic priest in a very poor part of South London, 'that nearly all we give goes to the worthless and the cadgers; we give a good deal at the door here: if a fellow comes and tells you that he has had nothing to eat for several days, what are you to do? You must give him the money for a breakfast!' And as to the Charity Organization Society, he added, 'I would not touch it with a long pole.'

A leading lay worker in one parish blames the clergy very strongly for their administration of relief. Committees, he thinks, should be universal, and the great

danger of poor relief, when connected with religious work, is recognised by many. 'The curse of all spiritual work is bribery.' 'The clergy should have nothing to do with relief; if I were a working man I would not be seen speaking to one of them in the street.' So say the clergy themselves.

But other difficulties arise if the work is relegated to a relief committee managed on correct charity organization principles; the first being that 'the poor no longer applied,' because 'they could not, or would not, stand inquiry.' The poor, it is cogently remarked, 'do not understand strict administration.' It is also said that 'the deserving poor will not go before a committee.' Another of the church clergy, who 'cannot go with the Charity Organization Society,' says the Church should 'breathe love, not discover humbug.' Another, again, speaks of the Society as 'a bit too hard—no belief in repentance.' To 'temper justice with mercy' is the ideal held out. Another regards it as very little use to make inquiry, as he gives only to people he knows, and is ready to take his chance 'if they bite his fingers.' The waste of time, too, which results from committee methods, is complained of; 'too many letters;' 'Charity Organization Society too slow.'

Almost all feel that some modification of charity organization principles is, for them, necessary, and that it is impossible to follow fixed rules in giving. One who does not co-operate with the Society, confesses that the theory holds him in argument, but adds, 'it won't work; I don't dare to recommend any one to go to them.' So that, in the words of another, 'co-operation is impossible,' there being 'few applicants who would come up to the standard.' 'Too doctrinaire,' says another. 'Too cast iron.' 'In practice the thing is to have rules and to break them; if you do so with your eyes open you are not likely to do much harm.' Or, again, we read of one who tries to work on Charity

Organization Society lines, and believes them to be right, but 'has his moments of weakness,' and of another who, with eyes fully open, 'helps many cases which a society must refuse.'

On the side of this excellent but much abused Society we hear from one of the most successful of its branches that there is little genuine co-operation on the part of the clergy, who are felt to have usually one eye on their own cause, and to be unable to think simply of the effect of the charity on the recipient. Thus, they are apt to refer to the Society only the cases very difficult to deal with, or those needing permanent assistance; and it must be said that many of the clergy have themselves told us that they adopted this plan. The Society claims, however, and with good reason, that it has exercised a wide and deep influence (which it may be hoped will be a growing influence) in arousing a sense of responsibility. The poor themselves, and the working classes generally, have no sympathy with nor any understanding of the points at issue; but the undeniable unpopularity of the Charity Organization Society may be largely accounted for by the stories of their treatment told by the undeserving and unhelpable who have been refused.

It is said that those in distress who apply direct to the district offices of the Society rarely mention any minister of religion, and that the after inquiries do not reveal any such connection. 'Christian men never need relief,' says a Baptist minister; and we may add to this that if they do need it, their own people usually 'look after the Lord's poor.' Those of the 'Household of the faith' are first seen to. Nonconformists want help from the Society less than Church people, and the suggestive reason is given by one of the local secretaries of the Charity Organization Society that it is from the indifferent to religion who belong nominally to the Church of England that those in need of assistance come.

Amongst those who claim help, three classes may, perhaps, be recognised: Poor Law cases, clergy cases, and Charity Organization Society cases. An attempt made to watch the after-fate of those whose applications had been refused by the Society in one poor quarter of London disclosed that they had been helped along by the clergy, but were no better off. The great aim of the Charity Organization Society is to reduce these three classes to two, securing adequate, and if needed, prolonged assistance for all those who can be solidly benefited, and relegating others to the Poor Law. It is not a cheap plan; great and sustained and combined efforts have to be made if no case for which the public provision of the Poor Law is unsuited shall be driven to that resource, and we see this fact reflected in the comparative cost of church charities under strict or lax administration. There are parishes—the majority—where perhaps £50 to £100 is spent in tickets and doles; and others—a few—where a much larger amount is spent on the same lines; and, finally, there are those in which strict methods have been accepted, where from £150 to £250 is spent. Even so, the more expensive cases, such as those for which a pension is needed, are almost always left to be dealt with by local committees of the Charity Organization Society.

Bearing on this, I may quote the opinion of one of the Poor Law medical officers as to the value of voluntary charity. He complains that it is generally spasmodic and inadequate, and hardly ever lasts a sufficient time to be of real service. He instanced the case of widows left with young children. ‘Churches, chapels, and the like intervene, and give a little help, and the widow struggles on for a time, receiving something one week and nothing the next. She and her children become gradually weaker (both morally and physically), through want of proper or sufficient food; and ultimately, broken down in health

and destitute, she comes upon the parish. It would have been better had she come at first.'

I here make no attempt to lay down rules or judge between conflicting theories on this subject. My sole object is to develop the position of religion in connection with charitable relief.

There is, no doubt, a real difficulty in squaring the teaching we find in many passages in the Bible with the practical rules of action now laid down, not by the Charity Organization Society alone, but by all serious thinkers, including the leading representatives of every religious community in London, Jew or Christian, Roman Catholic or Protestant, Established or Non-conformist, Trinitarian or Unitarian. All practically admit the impossibility of acting upon the Gospel precepts, as does the whole of Christendom, with the possible exception of some sects in Russia. But by all the difficulty is evaded rather than met.

CHAPTER XI

THE POSITION OF RELIGION IN LONDON

§ 1

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS BODIES TO THE PEOPLE

THE attitude of the religious bodies in London to religion, to their own religious duties, and, amongst themselves to the members of their own congregations, has been set forth in the earlier chapters of the present and exhibited in great detail in the six preceding volumes ; but as to the attitude of these bodies towards the people at large, something more may be said by way of introduction to the converse subject of the attitude of the people towards them and towards religion generally.

In speaking of the attitude of a religious body, the reference is limited, on some issues, solely to the clergy and ministers, and almost always to those who, inspired by the doctrines of a particular church, share in its work : those who are not only convinced that they themselves hold the truth, but who feel constrained to spread the knowledge of what perhaps seems to them to be the one hope for every individual soul, and for the regeneration of the world. On them, in the providence of God, this task has been laid.

Those who take up their religion in this spirit are comparatively few in number, but the amount of work which they do is marvellous, and its influence on the

lives of the whole population, very great. It is hardly surprising if, in the hurly burly of work, and with the intensity of the feelings and beliefs which inspire it, there should be some lack of the sense of proportion or perspective, some distortion of view, some failure to understand the position of others and their own in relation thereto. Yet on a true perception of these points the success of their efforts must largely depend.

Outside of these inner religious circles comes the much larger body of those who, without possessing such intensity of conviction or such ardent zeal, do from many motives support the church to which they belong.

This outer circle of adherents and supporters forms the first and most readily responsive public. They probably come of a religious stock, their souls still affected by bygone spiritual experiences on their own part or that of their forebears. Such people can very likely be roused, at least for a time, to fervour, and from them mainly the inner body is recruited. The action and reaction that result constitute a large part of the life of every active church.

The successes achieved amongst such as these serve to strengthen the optimistic delusion common among religious bodies, which regards all men as open to receive the Gospel they offer to the world; and thus the attitude of these bodies to the people is largely based on a misconception of the attitude of the people towards them. One of the clergy suggests that London should be treated as entirely heathen and worked as a mission from one centre. London, says another, 'is thirsting for visitation; no place so lonely; hundreds of young men and women longing for sympathy,' by which he means religious sympathy and visitation in the name and cause of religion. The same kind of prepossession is reflected in the suggestion that the people might be won over if the Bishop of Stepney had a palace in the East End, or in the view expressed by a leading Con-

gregationalist in another part of London, that to catch the working man it was a fine building that was needed, 'for they do not care to go to what they describe as "a —— old iron shed."' Others think that it is the shyness of the public that has to be overcome, and point to the men who, they say, 'will lean against a fence and smoke as they listen; but who have not pluck enough to go to church, though they will purposely attend open-air meetings.' This seems to me to be a pure delusion. But the same idea is shown everywhere in the building of special missions and the holding of special services in them. Others again think there is need for a change in the form of the 'presentment of the truth,' if it is to be listened to: new words must be found and the old ones dropped. Many of the Church of England clergy attribute lack of success to the inadaptability of the church services to different classes, holding that they are only suitable for the instructed. And the belief that novelty is the one thing needed, is reflected in the remark of one who said he was 'too old to learn new tricks,' and in the need felt everywhere for young clergy to keep up the pace. The lack of all power of concentration is constantly dwelt upon, and the 'Tit Bits style' is thought to be necessary even for sermons; while the common position of those whom the churches make such efforts to reach is stated to be 'just carelessness,' in death as well as in life. Thus, while optimistic as to possibilities, the view is often almost despairing as to results; and in the main the attitude of the churches to the people is one of surprise at the rejection of the teachings of religion by so many of those to whom they are offered.

The belief is easily fostered that if the people at large were better as men, they would be more attentive to religious observance, and, conversely, that if more constant at church they would become better men; but if we accept the ordinary social view of good and bad, there is

no certainty that either statement is true. The words of St. Paul are very commonly quoted, and by nearly every sect, for almost all endeavour, and even claim to be, 'all things to all men, that some may be saved;' whereas in fact they are only *all things* to themselves, and *something* to a quite narrow circle of sympathisers. It may be that in their narrowness lies their strength. They approach the rest of the world in a spirit of undying hope, indeed, and of faith in the ultimate triumph of 'God's Word,' but meanwhile of amazement at what seems to them wilful blindness and obstinate unbelief, and this attitude often applies almost as much to the wrongheadedness of other religious bodies, as to that of the irreligious.

If the religious bodies would awaken energy for furthering the welfare of others, and would keep it pure, what they propose must be untainted, alike by the struggle of competition or by ignoring the work that others do, by magnifying their own office, by exaggeration of statement, or by bribery in all its subtle forms. But to avoid all this needs self control besides humility of spirit, for all these things do in a certain low but definite manner 'pay,' and result in a melancholy success. Highly coloured appeals bring in a golden return, treats and blankets swell the lists of mothers and children on the books of the undertaking, and, above all, the sectarian spirit binds and braces together the energies of the band of workers.

But if religious propaganda and denominational appeals are apt to be tainted in these ways so far as their own adherents are concerned, the risks are far greater as regards those whom the religious bodies aim to serve. When the poor are made the subjects of such ignoble competition, the result is apt to show itself in cringing poverty with all its evils: lack of independence, hypocrisy, and lies, accompanied by the contempt of those who stand aside.

Moreover, there is often an uneasy internal sense of

rivalry, accompanied by the consciousness that the inability of the religious bodies to present a united front to the world, strengthens the ground of the unbeliever. General approval can only be won by aims that are felt to make for the general welfare, and in so far as denominations appear to regard themselves as of intrinsic individual importance they are apt to lose moral status in the public view.

The general attitude of the religious bodies towards the people does much to create that of the people towards them. There is on both sides a lack of respect. On both sides the terms of approach seem to be wrong. If the churches, instead of demanding of the people 'how can we help you?' were to ask, even of the poorest and the worst, 'how can you help us?' a road might open out; and the battle would be won if it were found, as perhaps it would be, that the 'people', even the poorest and the worst, would claim their right to share the work on equal terms, asking for their part, not 'how can you help me?' but 'how can I help you?'

§ 2

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS BODIES TO EACH OTHER

The discomforts that exist in the relation between the various bodies, but especially between the Church of England and the Nonconformists, can be best indicated by extracts from the remarks made to us. It is a case in which evidence can hardly go astray, for the question is largely concerned with what is felt, irrespective of the degree of justification; and although there are some pleasant exceptions, there is not a little bitterness of feeling.

An Evangelical Churchman of position told us that for his part he was willing to preside at Nonconformist

meetings if asked, and often had done so at temperance meetings; but added that he could not invite any of the Nonconformist ministers to preside at his meetings:— 'They are to me as laymen, while I am a specially ordained priest; they may be better as laymen than I am, but in my eyes they are not ordained clergymen.' Another Evangelical mentions meeting Nonconformists on such occasions as 'The Soldiers and Sailors' Wives' War Fund Committee,' or 'The Children's Country Holiday Fund,' and of speaking for them on one occasion at a temperance meeting; but none of them had ever spoken at his meetings. And another, also Low rather than High Church, complained of the tendency of his flock to go astray. 'You spend half your time,' was his expression, 'in warning them against false sects.' Those belonging to the High Church take up yet stronger ground, and even tell those who are working independently that such as they 'have no right to be there without leave.' The responsibility, it is held, rests upon the clergy, and all the workers must be communicants at their church.

The Nonconformists tell the same story from the other side. The Church clergy, we hear, hold themselves aloof. 'In the eighteen months I have been here, I have not spoken to one of them,' said a Wesleyan minister. 'It is their fault,' he added. 'We would gladly meet them and work with them, but it must be on terms of equality. We will not abate one jot or tittle of our ministerial position.' A Baptist says the same. He would be delighted to work with the clergy of the Establishment if on level ground. 'No patronage.' It is not only toleration that they demand, it is respect.

Meanwhile, naturally, there is very little co-operation of any kind. A Congregationalist stated that he found it difficult to work on Charity Organization committees because of the 'frequently offensive behaviour'

of the clergy, who are usually in force on these committees. 'I do not like,' he added, 'being patronized by some boy, merely because he has "orders" on which I, certainly, lay little store.' There are, however, instances of cordial co-operation; this last witness himself mentioned one, but its spirit could not be presumed on, for when he wrote to the successor of the man whose co-operation he had enjoyed, hoping that the relations of the past might be continued, he called forth a reply of many pages telling him he was living in schism, and that no dealings with him were possible unless he joined the Church.

'The Church of England clergy look down on the Nonconformists; at most they tolerate us,' says another Baptist, who cannot understand why it should be so; while a Wesleyan missionary simply says, 'We never see the Church of England;' adding, kindly, 'In London you seem to be absorbed in your own work;' and that there was practical co-operation in this case was evidenced by the advantage taken of Church of England institutions on the part of his mission.

Presbyterian ministers in especial resent the name of 'Dissenters,' and do not even call themselves 'Nonconformists.' They are ordained in very regular fashion, and do not forget that in Scotland they represent the Establishment. This may tend to separate them from other Nonconformists, and whatever the cause the position they assume is very independent.

Though among the various Nonconformist churches it is difficult to maintain any very effective co-operation, there is seldom any ill-feeling. Independent missions are, however, in a different position, and sometimes complain of, and sometimes are complained of by, all the others. The superintendent of one such mission told us that he received neither help nor sympathy from the local churches of whatever denomination, and that there was no co-operation even with other missions. His

view was that he was ignored by the 'reverend gentlemen' because they considered that his organization was going beyond its proper sphere, and thus trenching upon theirs. It is clear that underlying all these jealousies, personal and sectional, is the stress of competition ; though surely there is room for all.

We have, however, heard in more than one quarter that the divisions between the Nonconformist denominations are breaking down. A minister of the United Methodist Free Church in an outlying part of London, where the population is much scattered, claimed to have Baptists, Congregationalists, Wesleyans and Presbyterians in his congregation ; and a Wesleyan, whose congregation is of similar mixed character, makes an interesting reflection when he says that if members of his congregation leave him it is quite possible that they revert to their old connexion. They may thus only appear to lapse, and are not necessarily lost to Christianity though they may be to Wesleyanism.

Some Nonconformists are no more willing than the Church to recognise 'unauthorized preaching,' or to accept the theory advanced by one of themselves whom they had slighted, that 'each one of us speaks with authority as he has it from above ;' but the main trouble lies between the Established Church and those who cannot submit to her authority and pretensions. To her the complaints mainly apply, and hers is the opportunity to rise above sectional ideas and assume the leadership. I do not hesitate to affirm that in London it lies neglected at her feet. To attain it, doctrinal authority which she is powerless to wield, and mediæval pretensions which may well be left to Rome, must, indeed, be abandoned. It would be a new departure, I grant, but no new organization is required. To give to others their place would be to fill her own, and this not in London only, but as the Mother Church of all the English speaking nations.

§ 3

THE ATTITUDE OF THE PEOPLE TO RELIGION

It may be said of the inhabitants of London, as of the people of England, that they are distinctly Christian in the sense that they would all (except the Jews) repudiate the imputation of belonging to any other of the great religions of the world. Which of them would not laugh in the face of an inquirer who gravely demanded of him whether he were Mahomedan, Badghist, Brahmanist, Zoroastrian, or Christian? To such a question there can be no doubt as to the reply. Furthermore, it may be said that though the mass of the people may not understand the exact force and bearing of the various doctrines of which the Christian system is built up, they are acquainted with them in a general way. The doctrines of the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, are fairly well known to them, and though many would say they did not well understand them, there would be no general disposition to question their truth. It would be mainly among the very intelligent, educated members of the more highly paid working class that formal disagreement would find expression.

But something more is demanded than a mere acquiescence which is often felt to amount to little more than 'not being prepared not to believe,' and such sentences as 'It is heathen London still;' 'It is heathen London with which we have to deal;' 'The rich have purses but no souls;' 'You may write indifference across it all;' are familiar in the mouths of the ministers of religion.

There is, however, another point of view. According to many, including not a few of the clergy themselves, everything that is beneficial may be brought under the ægis of religion. 'Only that which is harmful is irreligious,' says one, while some go so far

as to 'recognise no distinction between the sacred and the secular,' in which case all moral life could be accepted as religious, and of moral conscientious life in London there is much.

If, however, religion is not simply a moral mode of life, neither is it merely a devotional expression; religion is also an impulse and a persistent attitude, an intimate possession of the soul, perhaps not understood even by the individual, and very difficult of interpretation by others. But if we consider the recognition of the divine and the spiritual in life to be the distinctive characteristic of religion, judgment is still obscured. In this sense men are often more religious than is known. The most religious may be those whose professions are fewest; who may give no sign to the world of their inner spiritual life. The form of reserve that hates to display feeling is a national quality.

Although it is thus difficult to form any definite judgment as to the religious character of London, the fact must be admitted that the great masses of the people remain apart from all forms of religious communion, apparently untouched by the Gospel that, with various differences of interpretation and application, is preached from every pulpit.

Of the effect of age, sex and class on this aloofness much has been said. Children cannot be regarded as having any attitude of their own in this matter, save that of willing acceptance of anything pleasant that may come within their reach. It is not doctrine or ritual, but the measure of kindly welcome and the rewards, that determine the direction of their feet. And taking London as a whole, it is the young children alone who in the mass are responsive. Though easily won they are held with difficulty, and there is little continuity in their religious training. The habit of the home is stronger than the precepts of the school, or the influence of the churches. Girls are more amenable

than boys, and throughout London the female sex forms the mainstay of every religious assembly of whatever class. Otherwise the palpable distinctions are those of means. Fashionable and 'yellow' districts secure, at the least, prosperous churches and large morning congregations on Sunday. For the rest, what was written of North London holds good throughout. "Where the streets are 'red' we find a vigorous middle-class religious development combined with active social life. Where 'pink' there is as regards organized religion a comparative blank. Where 'blue' we have the missions, and step by step as it deepens to black, the more hopeless becomes the task. The map thus seems to give the key. . . . From these broad conclusions there is no escape."

Among the working classes there is less hostility, to, and perhaps even less criticism of the Churches than in the past. The Secularist propaganda, though not suspended, is not a very powerful influence. Pronounced atheism is rare. There is evidence that a wave of such feeling did pass over London nearly a generation ago, but the last twenty years have witnessed a notable change in this respect. The success at the polls, whether for Boards of Guardians, Borough Councils, or the School Board, of men and women who in the name of religion are giving their lives to the service of the people, is one of the noteworthy facts in democratic rule. The sub-warden of a Congregational mission sits as Mayor of Southwark to-day.

While there has been this change of attitude towards the Churches, they also have been changing alike in the breadth of their sympathies and the scope of their work. Direct response was doubtless looked for and might have been expected, but there is little sign of it in the sense of an increased acceptance of the particular teaching of the Churches, and at this disappointment is felt. The humanitarianism of the clergy and others is

approved of, but their doctrinal teaching carries no weight. The fact that working men are more friendly, more tolerant perhaps of clerical pretensions and in a sense more sympathetic, makes them no more religious in anything approaching to the accepted meaning of the word. And to this we must add that a liberalised form of Christianity, as preached by some, makes no better headway ; the fact, indeed, remains that in those chapels and missions in which the greatest proportion of really attached working men are found, the teaching is strictly and even narrowly orthodox.

What then is happening? If the working classes are not becoming more religious, what direction does development take? It is claimed that changes making for improvement are in progress among them, that habits are becoming softened, that the influence of education is making itself felt, that intelligence is spreading, that the range of interests is widening: are, then, their interests becoming more political, or more social, more intellectual or more material? No conclusive answer can be given. We only know that such interests as trade unions and friendly societies, co-operative effort, temperance propaganda and politics (including Socialism) with newspapers and even books, are filling, in the mental life of the average working man, a larger space than in the past, and with some may be taking a place which might have been otherwise occupied by religious interests; but this usurpation and engrossment of the mind may probably be asserted much more confidently of pleasure, amusement, hospitality and sport. In these matters a measure of the demand is found in the facility of the supply, and for all the last-named the facilities readily keep pace.

For most wage earners the claims of the working day are not so exacting as in the past. The great mass of men have more leisure, but the time freed goes in some of these other directions; religion hardly gains.

One who fought hard for the Saturday half-holiday, hoping that Sunday would then be given to God, sadly admits his mistake. The maw of pleasure is not easy to fill. The appetite grows. Sunday is increasingly regarded as a day of mere recreation. Nationally we have yet to learn how to use the day. The old 'dulness' which one witness regarded as 'our salvation, physically as well as spiritually,' has been rejected; but the full force and the best form of alternative interests and attractions are not yet realized.

Apart from the Sunday question, the other interests mentioned are, however, not in themselves absolutely incompatible with the maintenance of active religious connexions. In practice the associations of the public-house, the music-hall or the race-course conflict with those of church and chapel, but there is nothing inherently or theoretically inconsistent between the two sets of interests. There is nothing that is found so in Roman Catholic countries, nor among ourselves, by many middle-class families who are able to enjoy the theatre on Saturday and yet join in active Christian communion on the following day. The conflict arises from the character which these amusements have acquired, and the spirit in which they are sought, both of which religion, if accepted, might successfully modify. We therefore turn rather to the special obstacles which in the case of the working classes prevent church going. These have been largely studied in the preceding volumes, and may be taken as constituting the attitude of these classes to religion.

The churches have come to be regarded as the resorts of the well-to-do, and of those who are willing to accept the charity and patronage of people better off than themselves. It is felt that the tone of the services, especially in the Church of England, is opposed to the idea of advancement; inculcating rather contentment with, and the necessity for the

doing of duty in, that station of life to which it has pleased God to call a man. The spirit of self-sacrifice, inculcated in theory, is not observed among, or believed to be practised by, the members of these churches in any particular degree, and this inconsistency is very critically and severely judged. Phrasing it somewhat differently, the working man would doubtless heartily endorse the opinion of one of the clergy themselves, that 'what we want for the recovery of the lapsed masses is not more but better Christians.'

There is also an incompatibility of moral temper. The average working man of to-day thinks more of his rights or of his wrongs than of his duties and his failures to perform them. Humility and the consciousness of sin, and the attitude of worship, are perhaps not natural to him. He is not helped by calling himself a miserable sinner and would probably feel the abasement somewhat exaggerated, and, in the same way, perhaps, triumphant praise strikes in him no sympathetic note.

'The dawn of hope for the working man, who has begun to realize that he has ample opportunities to improve his position,' was regarded by one of our witnesses, himself a clergyman of the Church of England, as 'the main factor in the improved moral tone of the present day,' due otherwise to a combination of causes—religious, educational, and administrative. But how does the ordinary religious service fit in with this ideal? Neither the Prayer Book nor the New Testament itself give any prominence to the idea of progress, either for the community or for the individual, except in so far as it is involved in the ideas of moral and spiritual regeneration. It may, indeed, be urged, that with these all true progress will be ensured, and without them none, but it is difficult for those below to regard the matter in this light.

As to religious truth, among many teachers, the

inquirer in the end is thrown back upon himself to form conclusions as best he may, and, in most instances, finding no satisfactory solution he puts the issue by. Amongst all the reasons for abstaining from public worship, genuine, conscientious, reasoned unbelief takes "a very small place.

The clergy and ministers have no authority that is recognised, but their professional character remains, and owing to it they perhaps lose influence. It is accounted their business to preach, they being paid to do it; and their manner, though accepted as a pose necessary to the part they play, is somewhat resented. No prestige covers them—"they are no better than other men." In the case of the Roman Catholic priesthood alone do we find the desired combination of professionalism and authority, safeguarded because accepted, and resting not on the individual but on the Church he serves; and where most nearly approached, it is by the saintly lives of some of the High Church clergy. To live a life of voluntary poverty seems to be the only road to the confidence of the people in this matter.

To the reasons adduced to account for the abstention of the working classes may be added the habit of detachment itself, bringing a feeling of discomfort in unaccustomed surroundings if this habit be at any time broken through; and answering to this we have the recognition that it is to warmth of welcome that success is mostly to be attributed when success is secured at all.

Finally, it may be said that London surroundings bring little or no pressure to bear in the direction of conventional church-going. Even men who have been churchwardens in the country feel, we are told, no obligation to attend church here, and the ordinary resident knows that, in this respect, his conduct, so far as non-attendance goes, is for the most part free from observation, and, if observed, from comment. Among

the working classes the pressure exerted is apt to be on the opposite side, such as in the 'ragging' of the workshop, or the sneers of neighbours who connect religious observance with cupboard love. But in a general way, London life secures for all men the maximum freedom of conduct. Even criminals find it their best hiding-place. To ask no questions is commonly regarded as the highest form of neighbourliness.

§ 4

THE ATTITUDE OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL

At bottom it is with the individual soul that religion has to do. The experiences of the soul form the basis of every religion. From their intensity springs faith, and from their uniformity hope, while from their divergence should spring charity in matters of religious opinion. Divergence among these experiences is no less characteristic than uniformity, so that there results a bewilderment of inconsistency. For any individual, indeed, spiritual experiences may remain more or less constant, but as between one person and another they are very divergent, and they seem to repeat from century to century the same variations. In every age and with 'all people that on earth do dwell,' civilized or uncivilized, the selfsame notes are struck and responded to; yielding convictions that admit of no doubt whatever. It is felt that 'God has spoken.' If the convictions are not shared by others, it can only be because those others are deaf to His voice. Thus of Christians, how could it be possible for those who are filled with a positive sense of the presence of their God to question His existence? How could one who has experienced salvation fail to acknowledge the Saviour? Or how doubt the efficacy of prayer when the answer comes at once, even before he who prays has risen from his knees?

Compared to such manifestations, of what value are any subtleties of argument? Those whose tenure of belief is of this character are always few in numbers compared with the whole of any population, and amongst our people are very few. The various religious bodies in London make each a slightly different appeal, but each, while failing with most, succeeds with some. In every class those not seriously concerned far outnumber the rest, but those deeply touched are drawn from all classes. It is the form of expression rather than the profounder spiritual development of religion that is affected by class.

It is not as rich and poor, brain-workers or manual labourers, learned or ignorant, educated or uneducated, sober or self-indulgent, or even as good or bad (measured by any ordinary human standard) that the people are divided as concerns their reception of religion. Social cleavages all leave their mark, but they are not dominating influences. Take rich and poor: the rich man who is religious receives his religion differently from the poor man who shares the same faith, and one form of religion may be best suited to the rich and another to the poor; but it cannot be said either that men are religious because they are rich and irreligious because poor, or that they are religious because poor and irreligious because rich. *Primâ facie*, either alternative might very well be true, but neither has any foundation in fact; it is as individuals, and not as rich and poor, that men are or are not religious. Nor are these experiences of the soul dominated by the balance between mind and body, as represented by the work of daily life with head or hand, or by training of the mind, or acquisition of knowledge and habits of thought. Again, at most, only the form is affected; neither the highest mental training nor its entire absence leads particularly either to or from religion.

Nor does the greatly desired and perfect balance

expressed by the words *mens sana in corpore sano*, take its fortunate possessor one single step in either direction. Ill-health is indeed credited with constraining even the Devil himself, and often has a strong and genuine spiritual influence, but we cannot press this so far as to couple religious susceptibility broadly with ill-health. So, too, strength or weakness of character, sobriety of conduct and self-restraint, with their hapless opposites, afford no clue. In weakness of will, as in ill-health, men may turn to God, but the votaries of religion have assuredly no monopoly of human frailty. Lastly, as to good and bad. No one will, I think, hold that all those who are good are religious, nor would it be easy to maintain that no bad person could be so, even though the assertion be safeguarded by the interpolation of the word 'truly' before religious. On this subject the common view is rather remarkable in its flat inconsistency, for almost every man who is recognised as 'good' is credited with being also religious, while, too often, those who are recognised as being religious are profoundly distrusted. This view, which discounts every expression of religion, while yet recognising the substance, tends rather to increase the confusion, and in vain we seek a way out by the extreme course of branding as hypocrites those whose life does not square with their professions.

Youth and age are conditions of a more general character, but too balanced in effect to provide any rule. The old become dull and stiff; the young are more accessible and more easily moved; but the old cling to the support of religion while the young are apt to fly off in rebellion, and on the whole it cannot be said that the young are more religious than the old, or the old than the young. In sex, however, we have a general cause which is reflected in general results, for though among women individuality is still the dominating influence, the women who are religiously

inclined far outnumber the men. Finally, there is race. The Welsh are pious Methodists almost to a man, the Irish are faithful Catholics, and the Scotch, always dialectically interested in religious questions, undoubtedly attend to religious duties far better than do the English.

But except as swayed by race and sex and to some small extent by age, religion depends on inborn characteristics of the individual soul. The voice of God resounds through the eternities ; and the human soul responds or it does not respond, or vibrates in varying ways.

Though such experiences vary not only in intensity but in character according to the individual, there is nevertheless much in common, so that what are termed 'waves of spiritual blessing' are experienced, or at any rate waves of sentiment. When this phenomenon happens to be associated with racial feeling, or with some historic opportunity and the advent of a great spiritual leader, individuality may for the moment be swept away ; but when the special impulse is expended, individuality reasserts itself in what has perhaps become a changed world ; and then, when they are no longer overpowered by one strong religious passion, a thousand other spiritual impulses are felt, a thousand spiritual voices become audible, and to some of them each soul of us responds.

It is this, perhaps normal, condition of diffused religion that we have to reckon with in London. There are those, who look for a great revival in response to prayer or 'in God's good time ;' their faith demands it ; and none can say from what quarter such a movement might come, or to what class it might appeal, or what shape it might take. But at present there is no sign of it, and we are left to trace the Spirit of God working among many minds in many seemingly divergent ways.

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